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# THE BANKS OF THE NILE



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## THE SHOE BAZAAR, CAIRO

THE name of "bazaar" has been given by Europeans to the narrow streets with shops devoted entirely to one trade. The Egyptians call them "Sûk": thus the Sûk-el-Gawharêgîr is the market of the jeweller, or the Sûk-el-Guzmah or shoe market. Here the red and yellow leather shoes which are in daily use among the natives are offered for sale, strung up on strings, in shops not more than a few feet square, where keen bargaining takes place before a pair of shoes changes hands.



# THE BANKS OF THE NILE

• PAINTED BY ELLA DU CANE  
TEXT BY JOHN A. TODD • NOTES  
ON THE PLATES BY FLORENCE  
DU CANE • PUBLISHED BY ADAM  
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## PREFACE

THE text of such a book as this ought to serve several useful purposes. Its chief object, apart from the artistic pleasure given by the pictures, is to help the traveller to understand what he sees while he is in the country, and afterwards to recall the pleasures and interests of his travels. At the same time there are many who can never hope to see the country, and for them a more exacting standard of information is desirable.

The writer's experience as a resident in Egypt, coming much into contact with visitors there, as well as with friends at home interested in the country, is that they are fully alive to the fascination of Egypt, which lies above all things in its unparalleled history. There is literally no other country in the world where past and present are so curiously blended; but the juxtaposition of different past ages is confusing in the extreme. A



cross section through a mound of accumulated rubbish may show a difference of thousands of years between the top and bottom layers. It is therefore impossible to understand the present unless one knows something of the past; but the average visitor is so impressed with the immensity of that past, and so confused with the kaleidoscopic character of the scenes presented to him, that he soon finds himself in a maze, and gives up as hopeless the attempt to remember the details, or understand the meaning and effect of the whole. He may talk glibly of dynasties, but he fails to retain a clear impression of the outstanding features of the history, or rather procession of histories, which is passing before him.

The writer may be condemned as over-bold for attempting to meet this difficulty. But the attempt is worth making, if only to bring out the central fact of Egypt's claim to the reverence of the traveller, which is that here, within the narrow compass of a strip of land a few miles broad by a few hundreds long, lies spread out in visible form the whole history of the world. Here in the Nile Valley the world's civilization began, probably centuries before the garden of Eden. It was an old country in the time of Abraham. It was long

past its best days before the time of Christ. The walls of the present native city of Cairo were built about the time of the Norman Conquest of England. Napoleon left his mark on these same walls and on the country in many ways. Less than forty years ago Cairo was still literally the City of the Arabian Nights. To-day the remains of all these successive layers of history are still to be seen, and under or through them all Egypt remains the same.

It is from this point of view that the writer proposes to attempt the task of stringing together the existing remains of former times in Egypt upon their proper thread of history, placing things as they are in their due relation with what they once were, and with each other. He will not attempt to treat of history for its own sake, but merely to outline the history so far as it is necessary to understand what is still to be seen in the country. As history, it will necessarily be very incomplete. Only in the case of the mediaeval (which in Egypt means modern) history of the country is it possible, or desirable, to deal with shorter units of time than centuries or dynasties. But the history of these latter times is so fully represented by existing buildings, especially in Mediaeval Cairo, and the

history of the nineteenth century especially, covering the reign of the present dynasty, has exercised so direct an influence upon the modern economic conditions of the country, that a less telescopic view of the events of these periods is not only justified, but necessary.

As qualification for the task the writer pleads only five years' residence in the country, but in a position which not only made it possible for him to get into touch with many of those who are authorities upon different branches of the subject, but also made it his duty to know something of the modern economic conditions of the country, and of the history of their development. If he can convey to the reader any notion of the pleasure which he himself found in the study, he will feel well rewarded.

JOHN A. TODD.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,  
NOTTINGHAM, *September* 1913.

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•  
**THE GIFT OF THE NILE**



# CHAPTER I

## THE GIFT OF THE NILE

To quite a peculiar degree, the whole history and conditions of Egypt are wrapped up in its physical geography. Egypt is literally the gift of the Nile, for the Nile made Egypt in every sense of the word.

To realize this thoroughly, it must first be kept in mind that the climate of the whole area of Egypt, from the Mediterranean to the borders of the Sudan, is practically rainless. The rainfall even on the coastal strip, from Port Said to Alexandria, is only about 4 to 8 inches per annum. In the Delta it tapers off, till at Cairo it is only about 1 inch. At Luxor it has fallen to vanishing point, and we enter a belt which is as nearly rainless as any in the world. The result is that Egypt simply would not exist if it were not for the Nile. It is no exaggeration to say that if a

hostile power in the Sudan were to divert the waters of the Nile (and the idea is not so utterly impossible as it may seem), there would not be a blade of corn or a human being left alive in Egypt after one summer.

The whole existence of Egypt is dependent on the Nile water, both for drinking and for irrigation, and its fertilizing power is astonishing; a little of it will really make the desert blossom as the rose. Spill a bucket of water on the desert and it will grow green things for months afterwards. In the Wady Hof at Helouan, that extraordinary cut in the hills which is obviously water-worn, rain falls in sufficient quantities to bring down the occasional "spates," which are such a wonderful sight, perhaps only once in several years; yet there are always traces of vegetation to be found in the midst of the arid rocky desert waste.

But in another sense the Nile has still more literally made Egypt. The cultivated land is practically confined to the narrow strip of alluvial land bordering on the river, or extending into the fan-shaped Delta, where the Nile divides below Cairo into the Rosetta and Damietta branches. All this area is composed of silt brought down through endless ages by the Nile from its farthest





## DAMIETTA

DAMIETTA is frequently called the "Venice of Egypt," and like the real Venice her glories, from a commercial point of view, have departed. Many of her old houses and mosques are crumbling to the shore, and there is a general air of dilapidation about the town. The canals which thread the town take the place of roads, and *feluccas* laden with vegetables and other market produce ply up and down and save the inhabitants of the houses from going to market, and much bargaining is done on the steps of the houses which lead down to the water's edge. Damietta was probably at the zenith of its prosperity in the days of the Crusades, and was at one time especially celebrated for its trade in leather.

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sources, mostly in the Abyssinian mountains, and left by the receding flood, which in the old days spread out over the whole country. And the Delta and the long narrow strip of cultivation on both banks are really the whole of Egypt, though their entire area is only about one-thirtieth part of the 350,000 square miles which form the official area of the country. The rest, with the exception of the various oases such as Khargeh in the Libyan desert, is simply uncultivable desert, and will always remain so.

Not only has the Nile brought Egypt into existence, but it is the essential condition of its social and political life; for it still provides the chief means of communication throughout the land. Nothing is more striking on one's first arrival in the country, especially if it be in early autumn when the Nile is in high flood, than the spectacle of sailing-boats merrily sailing up the Nile against the heavy current, while those coming down drift slowly with the current. The wonderful North wind, which makes such a paradox possible, is so reliable that the whole river traffic depends upon it. It has made the Nile the chief avenue of communications from end to end of the country; and as Egypt is all length, with very

little extension sideways into the desert, the result is practically free transport, without cost of fuel or labour for motive power, all over the land. Meteorologists tell us that this extraordinary wind is not merely an accident, but is the result of the Nile itself; that the presence of the great valley and the coolness of the Nile waters in it are actually the cause of the North wind.

It was the Nile which alone made possible the mighty monuments of Egypt from which we have derived our knowledge of her history. The granite of Assuan and the limestone of the Mokattam Hills, near Cairo, were brought to the site of the Pyramids at Giza or the tombs and temples at Luxor by great rafts at flood-time. Again, it was the control of the Nile and the supply of water for irrigation purposes which gave the Pharaohs absolute power of life and death over all the people, freemen almost as much as slaves, and so made it possible to command unlimited supplies of unpaid labour for such gigantic tasks as the erection of the Pyramids.

Yet again, the Nile is the key to the history of Egypt, even to prehistoric times. The earliest records of civilization in every part of the world



## THE GREAT PYRAMID AT GIZA

THE largest of the three pyramids, the most world-renowned of all Egyptian monuments, was built by Cheops, the second king of the IVth Dynasty, B.C. 3733, to serve as his tomb. Its height is now 451 feet and was originally 30 feet higher before the stone fell which left a platform about 30 feet square, at the top. According to Dr. Lepsius, kings of Egypt built for themselves a small though complete tomb pyramid when they ascended the throne. This they increased in size during every year of their reign, by adding a fresh outer coating of stone, which was left in steps on the outside, it being the duty of their successor to fill it in and make a finished pyramid when it contained the sarcophagus of the dead king. The entrance is on the north side, about 40 feet above ground, and various long passages lead to a large hall and the pointed roofed Queen's Chamber. From the large hall another passage leads to the ante-chamber, originally closed by large granite doors, and finally to the King's Chamber, granite lined, and containing the broken sarcophagus of Cheops.



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point to the general rule that civilization first began in the valleys of great rivers where a warm climate and fertile soil made life easy and gave leisure for the development of those luxuries which, gradually accumulating, make civilization. Thus the Hebrew tradition places the Garden of Eden in the valley of a great river, which can be identified as the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates.<sup>1</sup>

But such early civilizations present another feature in common. In every case we find the people consisting of two races or classes, a governing and a governed, and in every case the governors are found to be the descendants of a hardier race, who came originally from some less generous climate, and, overwhelming the softened races of the civilized land, made it their own. So it was in Egypt. In prehistoric times the valley of the Nile—the Delta was then probably only a marsh in process of formation—was occupied by a servile race governed by a ruling caste, who are described as having come originally from the mountainous land of Punt. This was probably Ethiopia or the Abyssinian mountains, where the Blue Nile itself comes from. It was by follow-

<sup>1</sup> Genesis ii, 8-14.

ing down the course of the Blue Nile that these hardy hillmen came upon the rich, fertile, and undefended lands of the Nile basin, which they promptly conquered and made their own, under the name of the Kingdom of Upper Egypt. Again, it was by the Nile that their descendants, following the river still farther north beyond the Cataracts, came into contact with the kingdom of Lower Egypt (not yet probably the Delta), which they again conquered and merged into the United Kingdom of Upper and Lower Egypt.

What the waters of the Nile gave, the lack of water defended, for Egypt was for many centuries absolutely isolated by the deserts on either side. These not only made her impregnable, but probably for ages prevented her very existence being known to other peoples, especially in Syria and Arabia. It was not till far on in the history of the country that we find these great natural barriers crossed, both for warlike and commercial purposes, and Egypt developing from a self-contained country into the centre of an empire which covered most of the then known world. Again, it is the beautifully dry atmosphere of Egypt which has preserved the relics of her ancient civilization through all the ages. Cleopatra's Needle has suffered more damage by

weathering in 40 years of London than it did in 4000 of Egypt.

The fertile valley of the Nile made Egypt the prey of all her long succession of conquerors; to the Romans she was the granary of the Empire, to the Arabs a fertile land of green places after the deserts of Arabia, and their first step in the conquest of the whole of Northern Africa which led them to Spain. Their course may be traced to this day in the remains of their language. "El Gezira" at Cairo, where to-day the Khedivial Sporting Club is the centre of a residential suburb, is the very same name as "Algeciras" near Gibraltar, meaning literally an island, and hence a green land as compared with the desert.

In modern Egypt we are still dependent on the Nile. Following the example of the traditional Joseph, whose canal, the Bahr-el-Yussef,<sup>1</sup> made the Fayum about 2500 B.C., modern irrigation engineers have striven to utilize every drop of Nile

<sup>1</sup> The tradition is very confused. The present Bahr-el-Yussef has probably little more connection, in fact, with the original channel leading from the Nile to the Fayum, or with the biblical Joseph, than Joseph's Well in the Citadel at Cairo has with the pit into which Joseph's brethren cast him (Genesis xxxvii. 24). Probably both of these refer to a mediaeval Yussef. But the fact is that great works regulating the flow of water into and out of the Fayum were erected in the time of the XIIth Dynasty.

water for the extension of the cultivable area, and the increase of the cotton crop, upon which the whole economic position of the country now depends. Every problem of government is made subservient to this, and the chief reason why the Sudan and Egypt must remain under one government is the thread of the Nile upon which both hang.

Finally, to the Nile is due the astonishing greenness of Egypt, which is the first thing to strike the traveller, especially if he enters the country by Alexandria. One thinks of Egypt beforehand as all sandy desert, but as far as the Nile can reach nothing could be further from the truth. It is all green crops and rich brown earth, and not much of the brown earth to be seen, even in winter, so frequent are the crops. The green of a *berseem* (clover) field beside the yellow of ripe corn in spring (for corn is a winter crop in Egypt) is a thing to remember. There are flowers too, though the fellah does not believe in wasting good land and labour, not to speak of water, on mere things of beauty. But the yellow flower of the cotton plant is not to be despised, and there are many beautiful flowering shrubs and trees, hibiscus, bougainvillea; all the fruit trees, pomegranate, almond, apricot,



## THE SECOND PYRAMID, GIZA

THIS pyramid was built by Kha-f-Rā or Chephren, the third king of the IVth Dynasty, B.C. 3666. It appears to be larger than the Great Pyramid, because it stands upon a higher level of stone foundation. The outer stone was originally polished, but the greater part of this stone casing has now disappeared. The opening, as is usual in all pyramids, is on the north side at 50 feet from the ground, and a long corridor leads to the hall which contained the sarcophagus of Chephren. Another opening, almost on a level with the ground, leads to a hall usually known as Belzoni's Chamber, as it was he who first explored this pyramid. A most interesting account of the building of all the pyramids is to be found in the works of Herodotus.







and orange ; and in early summer the blue jacaranda, the flaming orange-red mohur, and the yellow fluffy lebbuk. All these, with a background of desert, which can be a whole rainbow of changing colours, make a panorama of colour as wonderful as the history of Egypt itself.



# THE CRADLE OF HISTORY



## CHAPTER II

### THE CRADLE OF HISTORY

IN the Egyptian Gallery of the British Museum is a large case containing what seems at first sight to be a mummy. It is in fact a natural mummy, a body preserved only by the dry heat of the sand in which it was buried. It lies in a hole scraped in the sand, the body doubled up with knees to chin, surrounded by cooking pots and utensils, some of them still showing traces of the food which they originally contained.

It is one of the best specimens in existence of the earliest known prehistoric Egyptian. Found in Nubia, the southern part of Upper Egypt, it is typical of thousands of similar interments which have been unearthed there. Its age cannot be fixed to anything nearer than thousands of years, but the probable date lies anywhere between 8000 B.C. and 5000 B.C. ; in other words, it is any-

thing from 7000 to 10,000 years old. It shews that even then Egypt had reached a considerable degree of civilization.

The historic civilization of Egypt dates back to, roughly, 4500 B.C., when the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt were united under the dynasty which we now call by the name of Menes or Mena, the first known name of the race who built the Pyramids. Civilization in England dates back a little over 1000 years. At the beginning of the tenth century, on the death of Alfred the Great, England was certainly no more civilized than Egypt was under Mena. The contrast may serve to bring out the essential feature of the history of Egypt, its unparalleled age. The valley of the Nile was literally the cradle of civilization. In point of time Greece and Rome are nearer to us than they were to the first Egyptian Kingdom.

It is only by comparison with the traditional history of the Jews as given in our own Bible, the earliest written history of the world, that we can get any grasp of the age of civilization in the valley of the Nile. It is almost without doubt older than the Garden of Eden, that tradition of the birthplace of civilization which the Hebrews brought with them from their original home in Mesopotamia. When

Abraham went down into Egypt<sup>1</sup> the origin of the Sphinx was lost in antiquity, if indeed the great statue itself was not already buried in the sand, which to-day again is rapidly encroaching upon it.

Joseph's greatness in Egypt was probably contemporaneous with the second great period of Egyptian history, the Middle Kingdom, or the Hyksos kings who followed them. The oppression of the children of Israel followed by the Exodus under Moses brings us down to the time of the Great Empire, the last great revival of truly Egyptian civilization, and its high-water mark.

From the sixth century before Christ, Egypt has been the prey of an unending succession of foreign rulers, beginning with the Persians. They were driven out in 332 B.C. by Alexander the Great, whose Greek successors became known as the Ptolemies in Egypt.

Julius Caesar landed in Egypt in 47 B.C., and on the death of Cleopatra the country was formally incorporated into the Roman Empire. In A.D. 395 it passed under the Byzantine or Eastern Roman Empire, to which it nominally belonged until in A.D. 640 it was overrun by the all-conquering forces of Islam. In 1517 again the suzerainty of

<sup>1</sup> Genesis xii. 10.



the country passed into new hands, those of the Turkish rulers of Constantinople, with whom it still nominally remains. But both before and after that date the country was really ruled by a long succession of Mamelukes, till with the opening of the nineteenth century came the founder of the latest and still ruling dynasty, Mohammed Aly. He, though as a Turk he helped to drive the French out of Egypt, yet was little less alien to the country than any of his predecessors. The British occupation of the country in 1882 only adds another race to the many who have ruled Egypt for a day or a thousand years.

Yet through all this procession of the centuries Egypt remains in many ways unchanged. Every conquering race has added another layer of its own to the accumulation of the ages, another batch of monuments often super-imposed upon those of its predecessors, immediate or remote. But the Nile flows on past the Pyramids and the Sphinx as it did 6000 years ago. The real people of the country, the fellaheen or agricultural peasants, wear much the same clothes, use much the same tools, live much the same life, and shew much the same physical type of features as they did in the days of the Pharaohs. One often sees men in the streets



## THE SPHINX

THE age of the Sphinx is unknown and little of its history has been preserved. For many years it was believed to be no older than the date of the Middle Empire, but a stele was discovered in 1533, recording the account of the repairs made to the Temple of the Sphinx by Thotmes IV., which left little doubt that the Sphinx was of much older origin. It is hewn out of the solid rock, but pieces of stone have been added where necessary. The face was originally coloured red and there were ornaments on its head, but of these decorations scarcely any trace remains. Numerous legends and superstitions have in all ages been connected with this imposing and mysterious relic of ancient days. Various Mohammedan rulers in Egypt are said to have been responsible for the battered condition of its features, as they caused it to be used as a target.





of Cairo to-day who might have sat as models for the figures in the temple reliefs 4000 years ago. Most of them adopted the religion of their last conquerors, the Mohammedan Arabs of the seventh century, while others, now called Copts, retained their old religion, which was an early form of Christianity; but the difference between the two sections is not in the least degree racial. Both represent the original stock of the ancient Egyptians, remarkably little changed by intermixture with the successive conquering races.



# THE PYRAMIDS AND THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS

4500 B.C. TO 332 B.C.

.





## CHAPTER III

### THE PYRAMIDS AND THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS

4500 B.C. TO 332 B.C.

#### MEMPHIS AND THEBES

EXACT chronology in Egyptian history will probably never be possible. In spite of the assistance derived from astronomical parallels, we find experts differing more than a thousand years as to the date of the Pyramids. But it really matters little to the ordinary visitor. What is necessary for him is an outline of *comparative* chronology, so that he may be able to place the various periods of Egypt's greatness, decline, and revival, in their proper sequence, and may understand roughly how these periods fit in with contemporary history in other parts of the world, so far as any is known.

There were, then, three great periods in the history of Egypt's thirty dynasties before the first incursion of foreign rulers. These may be described

as the First or Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom, and the Great Empire. Between these there lies in each case a period more or less unknown, because the country for the time was broken up into petty divisions, none of which was great enough to leave its own distinctive mark on the history of the period.

The First Kingdom, or Old Empire as some prefer to call it, dates back to the beginning of historical times in Egypt when, under Mena, the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt were united in the first joint Kingdom. This union is symbolized by the use of the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt in the pictures of the Pharaohs of these and later days. The date of this is variously put by different authorities at from 5500 B.C. to 3400 B.C.

It would be wrong to imagine, however, that this period, though it is the oldest of which we have historical record, represents anything like the beginnings of civilization in Egypt. It is difficult to define civilization, but there is no doubt that long ere this the separate kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt had reached a stage of development which fully merits the name. Breasted, for example, who dates the Pyramids of Giza as recently as

2900 B.C., credits the predecessors of the Pyramid builders with the discovery of the astronomical basis of the calendar more than 1300 years earlier (4241 B.C.), and 800 years before the accession of Mena.

But under the dynasties of Mena and his successors Egypt acquired at least one evidence of civilization which it had never possessed to the same extent before, namely, an established and centralized government, bearing effective rule over what must have been in these days the largest extent of country ever comprised under one ruler. The administrative centre of the kingdom was for the greater part of the time, if not at first, at Memphis, near Cairo, to which it probably came from Abydos. The site of Memphis is now indicated by the long stretch of sand-hills extending in the desert from the pyramids of Giza to those of Sakkara and Meydum, 10 miles at least farther south. It must have been for these days a mighty city, and its ruins are still lying buried under the sand waiting to be dug out for our enlightenment. It is estimated that, at anything like our present rate of progress, it will take about 400 years to clear them out.

The Step Pyramid of Sakkara, built by Zoser of

the IIIrd Dynasty probably about 4000 B.C., is the earliest remaining building of this period, and therefore, in all probability, the oldest built structure in the world. It was followed, probably a century later, by the Great Pyramids, of Cheops or Khufu, Chephren (Khafrā), and Men-kau-ra at Giza, with their numerous entourage of smaller pyramids and the surrounding belt of lesser tombs cut in the walls of the rocky plateau upon which the Pyramids themselves are built. To this period also belongs the Sphinx, of whose origin and purpose nothing is yet really known.

Of this Memphite period the most striking feature is just that centralized government which brought it into existence. The whole country was divided into provinces, all governed from the centre of the kingdom to which their revenues were gathered. The system of government was, of course, entirely despotic. The greater part of the population consisted of slaves, and even the nominally free men probably could not escape from the *corvée* or forced labour, which was first used, it is said, to alter the course of the Nile before building the Pyramids, and is still used on a modified scale to protect the Nile banks in time of flood.

The builders of the three great Pyramids at



### THE THIRD PYRAMID, GIZA

There appears to be little doubt that the third Pyramid was built by the fourth king of the IVth Dynasty, Men-kau-ra, about 3633 B.C., though some ancient writers claimed that a queen of the VIth Dynasty was the builder. This theory was discarded when the sarcophagus and coffin of Men-kau-ra was found in one of its chambers in 1837. Fragments of the coffin may be seen in the British Museum, but the sarcophagus was lost through the wreck of the ship which was transporting it to England. It is thought that it was not completed by the original builder, and that his successor, instead of completing the tomb, added to it, and made a second chamber to hold his or her body. In 1196 a determined attempt was made to destroy this pyramid by command of the Mohammedan ruler of Egypt, which probably accounts for its damaged condition.







Giza were probably kings of the IVth Dynasty. By the time of the VIth Dynasty the Old Kingdom was beginning to fall to pieces, through the weakening of the central authority and the rising power of the rulers of the separate provinces, who were now seeking to assert themselves as independent princes. Thus the first great Kingdom is succeeded by a feudal "Dark Age" of which we have little knowledge, but out of which rose, probably about 2500 B.C., the second great period, known as the Middle Kingdom, culminating in the XIth Dynasty. Amenemhat and Useratesen (better known as Sesostris) were the recurring names of their Pharaohs, and their pyramids are at Lisht and Dahshur (Sakkara) and at Illahun in the Fayum. This renewed centralization was still on a feudal basis, and its greatest achievement was probably the regulation of Lake Moeris (now the Fayum), while of its monuments the most famous, the great Labyrinth on Lake Moeris, has almost entirely disappeared. Described by Herodotus in glowing terms, it seems to have been in some way associated with the constitution of the government, its various halls being attached to the different provinces or nomes into which the country was divided.

The centre of government after the breaking up of the Old Kingdom seems to have moved further south than Memphis, first during the interregnum to Heracleopolis near Beni Suef and then to Luxor (Thebes), but it was not till later that Thebes became the established centre of the whole Empire, finally displacing the great city of the Fayum. The city of On or Heliopolis, the home of the priests of Ra the Sun-god, founded by the IVth Dynasty, probably dates its greatest splendour from this period. The Obelisk of Heliopolis near Matarieh (*not* the new city of Heliopolis) is the only relic of its great temples, and was built by Usertesén, son of the first king of the XIIth Dynasty. "On" or "Amen Ra" appears in the Bible as "Ammon," and in Greek literature as "Jupiter Ammon." Potiphera, whose daughter Joseph married,<sup>1</sup> was a priest of On, and it was here at Heliopolis that Moses learned all the wisdom of the Egyptians.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the Middle Kingdom is the extension of its activities beyond the actual borders of the country, into the mysterious land of Punt in the south (which involved re-opening an avenue of communication

<sup>1</sup> Genesis xli. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vii. 22.



A ROSE-GARDEN AT GIZA, AND VIEW  
OF CAIRO





from the Nile to the Red Sea at Kosseir), to the southern waters of the Nile beyond the cataracts, in pursuit of gold, and into the peninsula of Sīnāi in search of copper, which had long been mined there on a large scale, again mostly by slave labour. Trade was opened up with Syria and with the early Mycenaean civilizations of Crete in the Mediterranean. All this, however, had not yet developed into the real empire building of the Great Empire to follow.

Again we enter a period of darkness, when the history of the country becomes obscured under a wave of decay or disintegration. The Middle Kingdom fell before the attacks of the Hyksos kings, of whose origin very little is known. Recent discoveries seem to point to the theory that they were of the same race as the Hittites, of whom we hear much in the later history of Egypt. Their capital was at Avaris in the northern part of the Delta, but whether they conquered the whole country, or whether part to the south round Thebes remained unconquered under Egyptian dynasties, is hardly known. The next definite fact which emerges from the obscurity is that after a long struggle for independence, extending over probably 150 years, the survivors of Egypt's former greatness at last threw off the yoke



of these hated foreigners, and re-established in Egypt one mighty kingdom, which surpassed all its predecessors in power and solidity, and in the grandeur of the monuments which it has left behind. This was the Great Empire, whose seat of government was firmly established at Karnak (Thebes), and which marked the highest point of Egyptian civilization. It may truly be called an Empire because now for the first time Egypt became a world power, extending its conquests into Syria as far as the Euphrates, as well as south to the higher waters of the Nile, into Nubiā, Abyssinia, and to the Red Sea. The results are seen in the greatly diversified character of the inhabitants of the country, the intermixture of foreign peoples such as the Jews, the introduction of foreign animals, such as the horse and the camel, and of foreign products of every kind, strange birds, spices, and gold. The records of these foreign expeditions of commerce and of war are found on the huge monuments of the temples, palaces, and tombs which still cover the plain at Karnak and Thebes, and which are in many respects the most wonderful of all the Egyptian antiquities.

But it was partly just this very extension of the Empire beyond the natural boundaries of the



## THE CITADEL FROM THE INUNDATED LAND AT THE BASE OF THE PYRAMIDS

From July till late in November the cultivated land which runs up to the very base of the Great Pyramid is converted into a large lake for the purpose of irrigating the land. When the water is let off, no time is lost in cultivating the land and the crops spring up with surprising rapidity, so that on land which it was possible to sail over during one month, in the course of the next a tinge of brilliant green shows promise of a crop of corn. Villages which for months have stood on islands, only to be reached by boats, are no longer on islands and the whole face of the landscape changes.





country which led to the final downfall of the Great Empire. Its foreign possessions were costly and difficult to hold. Egypt ceased to be self-contained ; its dependence on foreign countries for food supply, as well as for luxuries which had become conventional necessities, proved its undoing. Its hold upon the foreign possessions relaxed, and the foreign elements in its own borders proved a weakness. The events of the Exodus are probably typical of a weakening from within, breaking up the country again into a state of disunion and discord which presaged its fall.

Again obscurity falls upon Egyptian history, broken only at intervals by the emerging for a time of a more or less strong ruler, carving a kingdom for himself out of part of the country, but never again succeeding in bringing the whole, even of Egypt, under his control. Thus the later Theban rulers, weakened by the usurpation of the real power by the priests of Ammon, were forced practically to divide the country with a new dynasty, who set up their capital at Tanis on Lake Menzaleh in the Delta. They in their turn fell before the steady incursion of the Libyans from the desert, who for a time established their dynasty at Bubastis, near Zagazig, only to yield again to a race of Ethiopian or



# **GREEKS AND ROMANS**

**332 B.C. TO A.D. 640**





## CHAPTER IV

### GREEKS AND ROMANS

332 B.C. TO A.D. 640

#### ALEXANDRIA

THE Greek period in the history of Egypt was of relatively short duration (332 B.C. to 30 B.C.), yet it left a deeper mark upon the history of the country than almost any other; and the monuments which date from that period are perhaps the most numerous and certainly the most beautiful of all. It is indeed largely for this reason that a knowledge of the various periods of Egyptian history is so essential to the traveller, for the Greek monuments stand side by side with the far older monuments of the native Egyptian dynasties, and without some such knowledge one may fail to distinguish between monuments which, in point of date, are further apart than the Roman occupation and the Victorian

era in England. Thus, between the earliest and latest monuments of Karnak there lies a period of about 2000 years ; the great pylon of the temple of Ammon, for example, was added by one of the Ptolemies to a temple commenced by one of the Pharaohs of the Middle Kingdom.

The explanation of this very strong Greek influence may be traced to several causes besides that which was probably the strongest of all, namely the extraordinary character of Greek art itself.

In the first place, Greek influence had made itself felt in Egypt for a long time before the conquest of the country by Alexander. Greek traders were by this time covering the whole of the Mediterranean with their ventures, and going still further afield. The Greek colony of Naukratis, which was situated on the ancient Canopic arm of the Nile near Saïs, and not far from the site subsequently chosen for Alexandria, was a very important factor in the life of Egypt. From it Greek merchants carried their earliest Greek coins, for coins were never used in Egypt till then, to all parts of the country, and these coins are still found dating as far back as the seventh century B.C.

Again, the Greeks on their conquest of Egypt



## CAIRO AND THE CITADEL FROM GIZA



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wisely adopted a policy of conformity to native ideas, especially religious beliefs. This naturally led to the embodiment of Greek ideas and names in the history of the country, which is written in its temples. Alexander at once conformed with the ancient Egyptian tradition that the Pharaoh must be himself an actual descendant of the gods, and in order to do so he visited the temple of Jupiter Ammon at the Great Oasis, and was formally accepted as the son of Ra the Sun-god. On Alexander's death in 323 B.C. Ptolemy, the son of Lagos, the first of the Ptolemies (hence known as the Lagides), was deified in the same way with Arsinoë his sister, whom, in accordance with the ancient Egyptian custom, he married. All the Ptolemies were great temple builders, and all over the country we find the most beautiful temples, such as those at Philae, bearing their names.

In contrast to the history of Egypt under its native rulers, the artistic efforts of the Greeks were not confined to architecture or the decoration of the temples. Alexandria became the centre of art and literature of every kind. The famous Museum and Library of Alexandria, whose final destruction by the Arabs in A.D. 640 was probably the greatest artistic and literary loss the world has ever suffered, formed



the centre of a cultured life which had never hitherto been equalled in the world, and has never since been excelled.

Nor were the economic interests of the country neglected. The country was on the whole well governed under a complex and well-organized administration, which was so good that the Romans did not disturb it for several centuries, and then only to alter the names rather than the plan or the spirit of the system.

But the high civilization of the Ptolemies seems to have brought very quickly in its train the weakening effects which we now recognize as inevitable in a highly cultured civilization. As early as 200 B.C. we find them only able to beat off their enemies by the assistance of the growing power of Rome, and when under the later Ptolemies and Cleopatras the power of the dynasty became rapidly weaker, it was finally to the Romans that the succession in the rulership of the country fell. The story of Antony and Cleopatra is universally known, and when Mark Antony was finally defeated and killed by Augustus in 30 B.C. Egypt, as the property of the wife of the vanquished, fell by right to the victor as his own personal property. It was therefore not exactly on the same footing as other Roman

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provinces, yet still a part of the Roman Empire; but the prefects who were sent from Rome to rule it were never, in any sense, independent rulers. In fact, Egypt soon sank to the inferior position of a mere appendage to the Roman Empire, for Rome could not do without its constant supplies of wheat, which earned for Egypt the title of the Granary of the Roman Empire. Beyond this the Romans cared nothing for Egypt, and in later years paid very little attention to how it was governed by those who exercised the deputed authority in the country; and it was partly due to this, as well as to the weakening of the Roman Empire itself, that Egypt in the early centuries of the Christian era fell upon very evil days.

Egypt's connection with the actual life of Christ is largely traditional. The flight into Egypt is recorded in Joseph's Well<sup>1</sup> and the Virgin's Tree at Matarieh, Cairo, near the Obelisk of (Old) Heliopolis. Adjoining is a small Roman Catholic Chapel containing a series of frescoes depicting the supposed scenes of the flight and the resting on this spot. The well is certainly a very fine one, and the tree is a sycamore, obviously of great age; it is said to date in reality from the seventeenth century

<sup>1</sup> Not to be confused with that of the same name in the Citadel.

and to be the descendant of a previous ancestor of still older days. In the garden of the monastery attached to the chapel a plant which purports to be the original balm of Gilead is still grown.

There is also a tradition that the Virgin and Child were concealed for a time in one of the Coptic churches in Old Cairo, and the crypt of the church of Abu Sergeh is dedicated to the "Sitt Miriam" (Lady Mary) on this account.

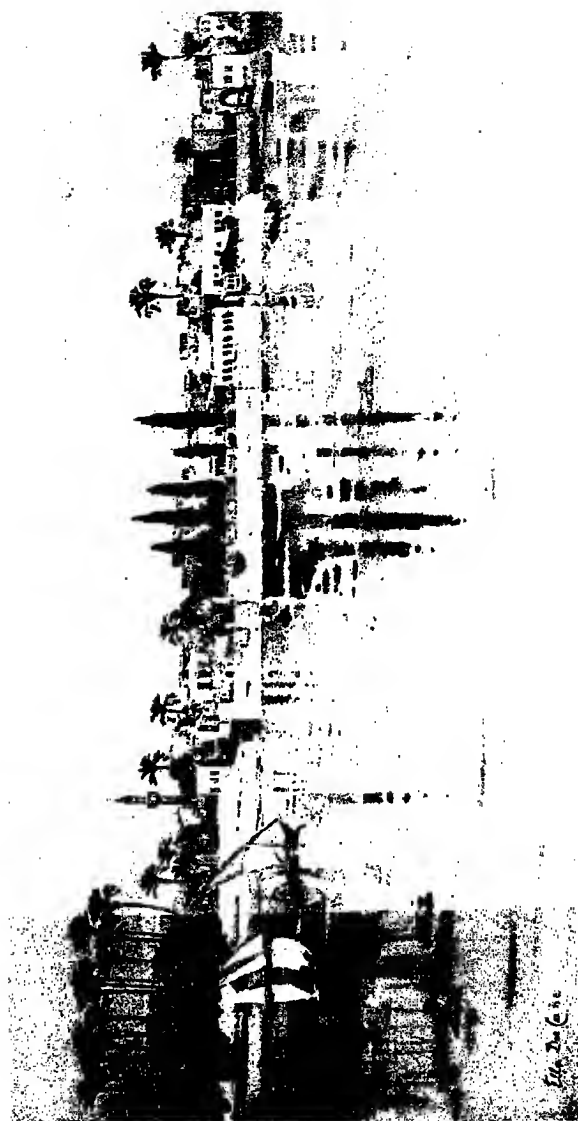
More definitely historical, however, is the connection of Alexandria with the early history of the Christian Church. There is no doubt that the part played by Alexandria was of real importance, not only to Christianity but to the history of Egypt itself. This, however, brings us to a later period, namely, the fourth century. In the partition of the Roman Empire between East and West in A.D. 395, Egypt fell to the share of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire of Constantinople, under which it nominally remained for the rest of its existence as a Roman province.

The early Roman rulers had followed to a large extent the practice of the Ptolemies in impressing their names and histories upon the monuments, but with the spread of Christianity and its final acceptance as the official religion of the Roman



## THE ISLAND OF RODA, CAIRO

RODA appears to have been one of the oldest suburbs of Cairo, and is exceedingly picturesque. It contains a very old Nilometer, dating from 716 A.D., and a mosque built by the Sultan el-Ghury on the island was called the Mosque of the Nilometer. Roda was the home of the Bahri, who ruled Egypt from 1250 to 1380. These were called the "Bahri," i.e. "white slaves of the river," because of the situation of their stronghold. Their tombs, which lie among the group of buildings to the north of the Citadel, known as the Tombs of the Mamelukes, are in a very ruined condition.





Empire by Constantine early in the fourth century, the government of Egypt had changed its religious character. Ere long this resulted in overthrowing to a large extent its civil constitution also, for the Patriarch or religious head of the community became more and more the real head of the civil government. From the outbreak of the great controversy between Arius and Athanasius during the first quarter of the fourth century A.D. to the final extinction of Roman and Christian rule in Egypt by the Mohammedans in 642, the history of Egypt is one long succession of disputes between the two great sects, who fought continuously, and in many cases most barbarously, over the question of the nature and divinity of Christ. So bitter were the disputes, and so fierce the hatred of each sect for the other, that no one seems to have had any time to spare for the economic interests of the country, and the land sank into misery and poverty. Indeed, these religious quarrels so entirely split up the country that, upon the appearance of the forces of Islam, the followers of Theodosius, who had refused to accept the doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon, were actually ready to welcome the invaders, though almost heathen, as an escape from the persecutions they had suffered at the



hands of their Christian brethren of the opposite sect. These followers of Theodosius were the predecessors of the modern Copts, or native Christians of Egypt, as opposed to the Orthodox Christians of the Greek Church. The name, which, as the native pronunciation shows, is a perversion of the Greek "Aegypti," does not, however, in any way prove that the modern Copts are the only survivors of the original Egyptian stock. Copts in these days practically formed the whole native population of Egypt. The majority of them afterwards became Mohammedan, and the name Copt has been confined to those who still hold to the old religion.

Apart from the later Greek monuments, many of which they finished or added to, as at Philae, the Romans left comparatively little mark on the architecture of the country. Some of the temples, like Denderah, they almost entirely rebuilt, while others, like Dendur in Nubia, are purely Roman. Two other interesting items may be credited entirely to them. The so-called "Pompey's Pillar" at Alexandria was really erected in A.D. 302 as a landmark to sailors, and bore a statue of the Emperor Diocletian. It was probably made out of a much earlier obelisk. But the most character-



## THE CITADEL

THE Citadel was built by Salâh-el-Din (Saladdin), and intended to be the most impregnable part of the fortifications of Cairo, and so it remained until modern guns came into use. It stands on a spur of the Mokattam hills, and dominates the whole town. It took thirty years to build, and much of the stone used was brought from the smaller Pyramids. An inscription over the gates says that "the building of this splendid castle, hard by Cairo the Guarded, on the terrace which joins art to beauty, and space to strength, for those who seek the shelter of his power, was ordered by our master the king, Strong-to-aid, Saladdin. . . ." The Citadel comprises many buildings, the Mosques of Mohammed Aly, of el-Nasr, and of the Sultan Selim. It was the scene of the treacherous massacre of the Mamelukes on March 1. 1811, when out of the 470 who were decoyed within the precincts, under the excuse of assisting at a ceremony connected with Mohammed Aly's son, one only is said to have escaped.





istic Roman erection in Egypt is the Roman fort of Babylon in Old Cairo. It was erected to guard the mouth of the irrigation canal which branched off from the Nile there towards Ismailia, from which point Trajan had reopened the old canal to the Red Sea. One peculiarity of its construction is of special interest. The alternate courses of red brick and white stone are supposed to have suggested the very characteristic decoration in alternate courses of red and white which has ever since been associated with Saracenic architecture.

The explanation of the dearth of monuments of the later Roman period is that the monasteries built by the religious organizations, and of these there were great numbers, were of very poor construction compared with their ancient predecessors. They were mostly built of brick, and have either disappeared entirely or crumbled to a mass of ruins shewing only meagre indications of any architectural merit.

It was within the walls of this old Roman fort at Babylon (Bab-el-Oon) that many of the early Christian churches<sup>1</sup> in Egypt were built, for protection from persecution. The miserable remains

<sup>1</sup> "The Church that is at Babylon . . . saluteth you." 1 Peter v. 13.

of these Coptic churches in Old Cairo give sad testimony to the poverty of the people who built them, or at least to the troublous times through which they have since passed. It is not a pleasant comparison for a Christian visitor to note the contrast between the magnificent impressiveness of the ancient Egyptian monuments on the one hand, the beautiful relics of the subsequent Moham-medan religious buildings on the other, and the miserable squalor and insignificance of the buildings which mark the intervening Christian period in Egypt.

Flinders Petrie's *History of Egypt*.

Vol. IV. "The Ptolemaic Dynasty," by J. P. Mahaffy (1899).

Vol. V. "Under Roman Rule," by J. G. Milne (1898).

# ARABS AND TURKS

A.D. 640<sup>1</sup> TO A.D. 1798<sup>2</sup>





## CHAPTER V

### ARABS AND TURKS

A.D. 640 TO A.D. 1798

### MEDIAEVAL CAIRO

NEARLY thirteen centuries have passed since the first foundation of a city upon the site of the modern capital of Egypt, and during that time the city has been rebuilt or extended five or six times. The mediaeval or native city, including what is known to visitors as Old Cairo, represents the remains of at least four different foundations.

At the time of the Arab Conquest in A.D. 640 there was probably a small town or collection of houses round the Roman fort of Babylon, which still stands as the only relic of Roman occupation in this part of the country. This was probably an outlying suburb of the ancient city of Memphis, itself distant nearly ten miles, for through all the

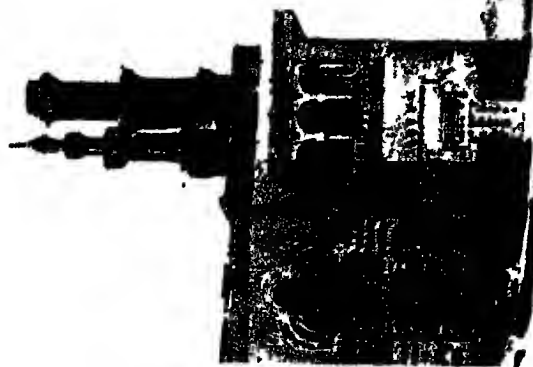
period of Alexandria's ascendancy under Greek and Roman rule the site of the old capital had never been deserted. The ancient city had extended gradually to the west bank of the Nile, while on the opposite bank, joined by a bridge of boats, a cluster of houses grew up under the shelter of the fort. Nothing is known of the original history of this building; but it was rebuilt in A.D. 116 by Marcius Turbo, one of Trajan's generals, to guard the mouth of the freshwater canal to Ismailia. It therefore antedates by more than 500 years the foundation of the original city which we now include under the name of Cairo, though that name was not given to the city for another 300 years.

When the Arab conqueror Amr-ibn-el-Aas, sent by the Khalif Omar in Damascus, besieged the Roman fort, his tents were of course set up in its immediate vicinity. After the surrender of the fortress, when the victors went to strike their tents to move against the other Roman garrisons in the Delta, it was found that a pair of pigeons had built their nest high up among the tent poles. It must be remembered that in Egypt a tent means any kind and size of a marquee, built of scaffolding poles and covered with great sheets of canvas,



## THE TOMBS OF THE KHALIFAS

THE buildings of the southern group of tombs which lie to the north of the Citadel are commonly, though erroneously, called the tombs of the Khalifas, though really they form the burial-place of the Circassian Mamelukes, who ruled Egypt from 1382 to 1517. These rulers were, many of them, originally slaves, hence their title Mameluke, *i.e.* "slave," and were divided into the Bahri Mamelukes and the Burgi or "tower" Mamelukes, the latter so-called as they belonged to the soldiers quartered in the Citadel. The Mosque-tombs of these last-named include that of Kaît Bey, which is the most important building in the necropolis. The whole cemetery is renowned for the beauty of its domes and minarets, and lies to the eastern side of Cairo in a wide stretch of sandy desert.



From the Gate



decorated with beautiful designs in Arabic lettering or geometric patterns in coloured cloth sewn on the inner side. The making of these tent cloths is one of the oldest trades in the East—Saul was a tentmaker<sup>1</sup>—and it can be seen to-day in the Tentmakers' Bazaar outside the Bab-el-Zuweyla in Cairo. To disturb such a nest was simply impossible to a pious Moslem, and Amr bade his servants let the tent stand. On their return to Babylon a year later it still stood, and Amr commanded his followers to set up the city, which was to be their new home, round it as a centre. Hence the new city came to be known as "el-Fostat," the Town of the Tent, or more fully "Masr-el-Fostat," for Masr in these days as now meant Egypt or its capital indifferently.

Not a building of this first city remains standing to-day, but the mosque of Amr at Old Cairo probably occupies the same site as that originally built by Amr at Fostat, and to this day, on the great Friday of Ramadan in each year, the Moslem ruler of Egypt must go in state to offer up the prescribed prayers in the old mosque.

Fostat remained the centre, or at least the chief business part, of the city till 1168, when it was

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<sup>1</sup> Acts xviii. 3.



deliberately burned to the ground to save it from capture by the Crusaders, who at that time overran Egypt for a brief space. But in the meantime it had been added to, and latterly superseded in all but commercial importance, by several new extensions, partly suburbs, partly separate seats of the various new governments. Thus in 750 a change of government in Islam had taken place; the Omayyad Khalifs (Caliphs) of Damascus had given place to the Abbasside Khalifs of Baghdad. To mark the change the new Governor of Egypt decided to set up a separate official quarter a little to the north-east of Fostat, and called it "el-Askar," meaning "the Cantonments." It extended from the mosque of Amr at Fostat to the site afterwards occupied by the great mosque of Ibn-Tulun, which itself was the centre of the next great movement of the city. Ahmed Ibn-Tulun was the first Turkish Governor of Egypt, who in 868 practically threw off the nominal sovereignty of the Khalifs in Baghdad, and made himself independent ruler of Egypt. His great mosque, which still stands, was the chief feature of his new suburb, known as "el-Katai" or "the Wards," because different quarters were provided within its area for all the different races or classes who inhabited it.

Many tales are told of this the first Sultan of Egypt. Most of them are in some way connected with actual facts, though it is often difficult to say whether the fact may be regarded as proof of the tale, or the tale has grown up to fit the fact.

One of them tells how Ibn-Tulun had built a great aqueduct across the desert to bring water from wells there to supply his wonderful new palace at el-Katai. Its ruined arches may still be seen, further south than the better-known aqueduct associated with the name of Saladdin. But the Egyptians have always preferred the muddy Nile water to anything else, and when objection was made to the clear well water, conveyed in his aqueduct, Ibn-Tulun sent for the learned doctor, Mohammed Ibn Abd-el-Hakám.

"I was one night in my house," he related, "when a slave of Ibn-Tulun's came and said, 'The Emír wants thee.' I mounted my horse in a panic of terror, and the slave led me off the high road. 'Where are you taking me?' I asked. 'To the desert,' was the reply, 'the Emír is there.' Convinced that my last hour was come, I said, 'God help me! I am an aged and feeble man. Do you know what he wants with me?' The slave took pity on my fears, and said, 'Beware of speaking disrespectfully of the aqueduct.' We went on, till suddenly I saw torch-bearers in the desert and Ibn-Tulun on horseback at the door of the aqueduct, with great wax candles burning before him. I forthwith dismounted and salaamed,

but he did not greet me in return. Then I said, 'O Emír, thy messenger hath grievously fatigued me, and I thirst; let me, I beg, take a drink.' The pages offered me water, but I said, 'No, I will draw for myself.' I drew water while he looked on, and drank till I thought I should have burst. At last I said, 'O Emír, God quench thy thirst at the rivers of Paradise, for I have drunk my fill, and know not which to praise most, the excellence of this cool, sweet, clear water, or the delicious smell of the aqueduct.' 'Let him retire,' said Ibn-Tulun, and the slave whispered, 'Thou hast hit the mark.'<sup>1</sup>

Another relates to Ibn-Tulun's coinage, and tells how in a dream one of the ancient Pharaohs of Egypt appeared to the Sultan, and told him of a great hidden treasure which he would find in a tomb in the Mokattam Hills. The ghost, however, warned him to make good use of it by providing his people with a gold coinage, and to see that the standard and value of the coinage were rigidly maintained, for he assured him that the relative fame of Ibn-Tulun and himself would be judged by posterity according to the purity and uprightness of their coinages. The fact behind this tale is that Ahmed Ibn-Tulun was the author of the first independent gold coinage ever issued by the Arabs in Egypt; up till then the gold *dinars* and silver *dirhems* of the Khalifate had been the sole cur-

<sup>1</sup> Makrizi, quoted by Lane Poole, *Middle Ages*, p. 65.



## AN ARAB CAFÉ, CAIRO

CAIRO boasts of many hundred humble cafés, where the customers sit cross-legged on wooden divans at the door discussing the news of the day and sipping many a cup of thick, sweet coffee, or lazily smoking a bubbling native *sheerba* (water pipe), while recounting to a friend their latest deals in a neighbouring *suk*.





rency. The new gold coins were called *Ahmedis* after him, and were famous for their purity and high standard. Many of them are still preserved in museums. The rest of the tale, however, must be taken with a grain of salt, for as a matter of fact no real coinage was ever used in Egypt before the time of the Greek colony of Naukratis.

Again, after another hundred years, a new foundation, still a little further to the north-east of el-Katai, was made by a new ruling dynasty, the representatives of the Fatimide Khalifs, so called because they alleged their descent from Fatima the daughter of the Prophet, and so claimed to be of the blood royal. To this new foundation was first given the name which has become Cairo, and the tale of its origin is typical of the thousand and one tales that hang round the origin and history of the city. On the 5th of August 969, Gowhar, the victorious general of the new Khalif, el-Mo'izz, having made his conquering entry into the city, which then consisted of Masr-el-Katai and Fostat, proceeded forthwith to lay out the foundations of a new city. Setting great store upon the wisdom of the astrologers, he desired to have their assistance in the laying of the foundations. Digging was to be commenced simultaneously all along the line at



an auspicious moment chosen by the astrologers. To give the signal, ropes carrying bells were hung from pole to pole along the line of the workings, and these were to be rung at the moment chosen by the wise men. Unfortunately, however, a raven anticipated matters by flying against the ropes and ringing the bells, upon which the whole army of diggers set furiously to work. The astrologers had to make the best of it. The moment chosen by the ill-fated raven was that of the ascendancy of the planet Mars, the god of war; but by a little ingenuity the evil omen was converted into that of victory, and the city was named "el-Kahira," the victorious, or in full "Masr-el-Kahira." Thus were chosen the two names by which the modern capital of Egypt is known, to the natives "Masr" and to the English "Cairo," which by a peculiar mannerism is to this day pronounced by residents in a way much more like the original spelling than the modern Europeanized version.

El-Kahira, however, was at first nothing more than an official quarter of palaces and mosques; of these there remain only the two great mosques of el Azhar and el Hákim, which, with those of Amr and Ibn-Tulun, are the only survivors

of the "congregational" mosques, built round a great open court to accommodate the crowd of worshippers at Friday prayer. El Azhar, "the Resplendent," was built in 970-972 by el-Mo'izz, the first of the Fatimide Khalifs, and soon afterwards became what it has ever since remained, the centre of learning for the whole Mohammedan world, the great University of Islam. The building has been much restored, but the education given has changed very little, yet there are still about 10,000 students, many of whom sleep on the premises.

The ruined mosque of el Hákim which lies between the two great gates, the Bab-el-Futtuh and the Bab-el-Nasr, was founded in 990 by his father, el-Aziz, who succeeded el-Mo'izz as Khalif in 975. It has been less restored than el Azhar, though its peculiar minarets have been curiously imprisoned half-way up by great pyramidal caissons of brick. El Hákim, after whom it was named, is one of the strangest characters in the strange history of the times. Latterly he claimed actual divinity, and his disappearance on a night ride on the Mokattam Hills, though the discovery of his ass and coat all slashed with dagger cuts seemed to point clearly enough to murder, gave rise to the sect of the

Druses who still await his coming in the fastnesses of Mount Lebanon.

It was not, however, till 1169, after the burning of Fostat already mentioned, that the present "City of the Arabian Nights" was consolidated by the erection of the great wall of Saladdin. This included the Citadel, also built by him, the existing city of el-Kahira, the ruins of el-Katai and Fostat, and a great area to the west towards the Nile, which in those days ran much further east than it does now. The modern quarter of Bulaq was then under water, and the banks of the Nile probably passed through the site of the present great railway station ; for the open space there still bears the name of the Bab-el-Hadid (the Iron Gate), which marked the western end of the northern wall of the great city, and was formerly called Bab-el-Bahr, or the River Gate. In this wall Saladdin included what remained of the previous wall, built about 1090 by Bedr, the great Armenian Wezir (or vizier, *i.e.* a ruler or deputy of the Khalif). This Bedr-el-Gamáli was the first, and the best, of many such deputies, into whose hands the real government of the country had fallen under weaker Khalifs such as Mustansir. Of Bedr's wall many parts still remain ; indeed they are the best preserved parts of



## DARB-EL-GAMAMIZ, CAIRO

THE Darb-el-Gamamiz or Street of the Sycamores is one of the most typical of the old streets of Cairo. No trace remains of the trees from which it took its name, but the over-hanging upper stories of the houses give shade to the shops below. In the narrow street, hawkers of bread, sweets, and the water- or lemonade-sellers, the most picturesque objects in Cairo, all declaim the merits of their wares. At the appointed hour the call to prayer will be given from the tower of the mosque, and can generally be distinctly heard above the din in the street below.





the wall. The great gates of Bab-el-Zuweyla, Bab-el-Nasr, and Bab-el-Futtuh, with the small section of wall which may still be traced among the houses beside the first, and the great stretch between and on both sides of the other two, are exceedingly interesting examples of a style of architecture, Byzantine according to Lane Poole, with which we are familiar in the old Norman castles of England.

This great Saracen, so well known in the history of the Crusades as Saladdin or, to give him his full name, Salah-el-din Yussef-ibn-Ayoub (Preserver of the Faith, Joseph the son of Job), was the founder of the Ayoubide Dynasty in Egypt, and left his mark on Cairo in many ways. Joseph's Well in the Citadel, 280 feet deep; the great aqueduct, usually called in error the Roman aqueduct, which carried water from the Nile at Roda to the Citadel; and many other achievements of similar character perpetuate his name. As a matter of fact, however, this aqueduct is believed to have been really built by a later Mameluke ruler.

The building of the Citadel and the withdrawal of the ruling power to that stronghold left the previous city derelict, and the two great palaces of the Fatimide Khalifs rapidly fell into decay. Now not a vestige remains of them, and the mosque of



Kalaūn occupies part of the site. Their mosques probably survived because they could still be utilized, though the Fatimide Khalifs had belonged to the Shi-ite sect of Islam, and were therefore rank heretics to all good Moslems of the orthodox party, the Sunnis. Now Saladdin's conquest had been made in the name of orthodoxy, and he quickly realized that the only way to make sure of the re-conversion of the country was to provide facilities for education in the orthodox faith. The importance to us of this great controversy is that it led to the introduction of an entirely new type of mosque, the *madrassa* or teaching mosque as opposed to the *gamia* or preaching mosque (place of assembly), such as Ibn-Tulun's. The difference was fundamental. The great open court of the old plan shrank from its former dimensions to a mere well or open shaft in the centre of the building, and at a still later date was covered with a wooden roof. From it four transepts radiated, accommodating the teachers and students of the four *orthodox* sects into which the Sunnis were divided. One of these transepts was deeper than the rest and contained the principal *mihrab* or niche pointing towards Mecca, the *minbar* or pulpit, and the platform or *dikka* from which the Korán was

read. In this new form of mosque, which soon became the prevalent type all over Cairo, one recognizes the similarity to the cruciform Christian church.

But while these successive rulers of nearly 600 years may be called the makers of Cairo, it is to their later, and in many respects less worthy, successors that we are indebted for the bewildering architectural adornment of the city. In less than a hundred years the house of Saladdin died out, and Egypt entered upon the period of the Mamelukes. This period in itself may be subdivided into three. The Turkish Mamelukes, who reigned from 1250 to about 1382, included the great names of Beybars, Kalaün, el-Nasr, to whom are due perhaps more of the existing buildings of Cairo than any other, and Sultan Hassan, whose enormous mosque (a *madrassa*) is to-day one of the most striking of all these buildings.

Mameluke means something "owned," hence a slave, and as these men were mostly Turks, and therefore white skinned, they are generally spoken of as white slaves. As a matter of fact, they were mercenaries originally brought over by Saladdin to act as his bodyguard and the backbone of his army, but they soon became too strong for their masters.

The first Mameluke rulers of Egypt were known as the Bahri Mamelukes, because their regimental quarters were at Roda on the river, and their appearance as the real heads of the state arose out of a dramatic episode, the rule of a woman in Egypt at its most difficult juncture. In 1242 the Crusaders under Louis IX. of France (Saint Louis) again invaded Egypt. The Sultan, el-Salih Ayoub, the last of Saladdin's dynasty, was struck down by death in the middle of his preparations for defence, and his eldest son Turanshah was absent in some remote part of the kingdom. At such a crisis one of el-Salih's *harém*, Sheger-el-Durr (Spray of Pearls), took charge of the situation in the most masterly way. Concealing Salih's death, she ruled the country in his name, went on with the military arrangements, defeated Louis at the battle of Mansura, and kept things together till the heir could be brought back to assume the throne. In two months he succeeded not only in finally vanquishing Louis, but also in offending Sheger-el-Durr and the Bahri generals, and was murdered by some of the Mamelukes. Sheger-el-Durr again took charge, basing her right not only on her election by the Beys, but also on the fact that she had been the wife of el-Salih, and had



## AN OLD STREET IN CAIRO

THE old buildings are fast being swept away to make room for wider streets with European houses, and before long the typical old Cairo house will have disappeared for ever. The humble shop where the native offers his goods for sale, shaded by a bright-coloured awning, is fast giving way to the modern shop with a plate-glass window. Gone also are most of the *mushrabzahs*, which for centuries past have hidden the native woman from curious eyes. Many of them are torn down to be sold to curio hunters, and with them vanishes one of the picturesque features of Cairo.





borne him a son. Though the son was dead, this, in accordance with Oriental custom, gave her a strong claim. The Khalif in Baghdad, however, could not stomach the idea of a queen, and sent word to the Egyptian Beys that if they had no *man* among them he would send them one. They therefore decided to elect a husband for Sheger-el-Durr, and the choice fell on Izz-el-Din Aybek. He found it a very unenviable post; she made use of him to fight her battles, but was exceedingly jealous of his interference in affairs of State. Finally she had him murdered, but this proved too much, and she herself soon met the same fate at the hands of a jealous second wife, whom she had made Aybek divorce. In her rival's presence she was battered to death by the wooden clogs of the women slaves. It is said that foreseeing her doom she devoted her last hours to pounding her jewels in a mortar that no other woman might wear them. They threw her body into the Citadel ditch, where it lay for several days to be devoured by the dogs. "Her end was like Jezebel's, yet she had saved Egypt."<sup>1</sup>

In 1382 the Bahri Mamelukes were succeeded by the second dynasty, who were known as the

<sup>1</sup> Lane Poole's *Middle Ages*, p. 261.





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Circassian Mamelukes on account of their race, and as the Burgi Mamelukes because their headquarters were in the Citadel. Only six of the twenty-three Sultans of this dynasty reigned as long as nine years, namely, Barkuk, el-Moayyad, Bars Bey, Gakmak, Kaït Bey, and el-Ghury. Most of them held their precarious position only a few months, and they were lucky if they escaped being murdered by their would-be successors. Of these six, Barkuk, el-Moayyad, Kaït Bey, and el-Ghury will always be remembered for their buildings. Kaït Bey especially was almost as prolific in art and architecture as el-Nasr, and his reign of twenty-eight years was the longest of any of the Mamelukes.

The Circassian Mamelukes in their turn lived to see the final downfall of Mediaeval Egypt in the Turkish conquest by Sultan Selim in 1517. This, as far as political history is concerned, brings us into touch with Modern Egypt, for it was then that Egypt once more passed under the suzerainty of Turkey, which is still its nominal political status. It was then, too, that the Sultan of Turkey acquired his present position as the head of Islam, for it must be remembered that he who rules in Stamboul is not merely the head of the civil

government of the Turkish Empire, but also claims a much wider kingdom as the Khalif or ruler of the whole house of Islam, and religious head of the Mohammedan world. It was on the Turkish conquest of Egypt that this greater right passed into the hands of the Sultan, for on entering Cairo the old Khalif, Muta-wekil, the last of the Abbaside Khalifs of Egypt, and therefore vested in the succession of the Prophet, was found in hiding in the city and carried off to Constantinople. In 1521 he was allowed to return to Cairo where he died in 1538, having bequeathed his title and rights to the Sultan of Turkey.

But though Egypt had once more been brought back to the position of a mere province of Turkey, the new conquerors never took the trouble to make their ownership of the country real. Subject to the payment of tribute, they contented themselves with appointing a Pasha to represent the suzerain power in the country ; otherwise they left Egypt to look after itself, which simply meant that the old rule of the Mamelukes was quickly resumed though under less desirable conditions than ever. For nearly three hundred years Egypt was the happy hunting ground of warring factions of Mameluke Beys, who plundered and harried the country or

fought with each other from one year's end to the other. They added little or nothing to the glories of Cairo, and indeed the marvellous thing is that so much of the ancient glories survived their time. It was the last descendants of these terrible knights of misrule who occupied the country when Napoleon cast his eye upon it in the closing years of the eighteenth century, and who, after their last vain rally against him, were finally extirpated by a new leader, Mohammed Aly. With the latter we pass into a new dynasty and a new condition of affairs, so strikingly in contrast with all that preceded it as to mark distinctly the beginning of the history of Modern Egypt.

*History of Egypt.* Vol. VI. "The Middle Ages," by Stanley Lane Poole (1901).

*Cairo.* Dent's Mediaeval Towns Series, by the same author.

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See Historical Sketch Map of Cairo, facing page 1.

**MOHAMMED ALY AND MODERN  
EGYPT**

**1805-1849**



## CHAPTER VI

### MOHAMMED ALY AND MODERN EGYPT

1805-1849

BORN at Kavalla in Albania in 1769, the same year as Napoleon and Wellington, the career of Mohammed Aly is in a way hardly less remarkable than those of his great compeers, to one of whom he owed the opportunity which raised an unknown Albanian "bonnet laird" to be the head of a great country, not his own, and the founder of a ruling dynasty.

When Napoleon in 1798 landed in Egypt with his great expedition, the Sultan could do nothing to defend the country except to issue a proclamation throughout Turkey calling for volunteers. The village of Kavalla contributed a company of 300 Bashi-Bazouks, of whom Mohammed Aly, then thirty years of age and father of a family, was second in command, and they joined the fleet at Rhodes



to carry them to Aboukir, near Alexandria. Napoleon, who had already defeated Murad Bey and the Mamelukes at the great battle of the Pyramids (really Embabeh), hurried north again and literally drove the Turks into the sea.

Returning in 1801 in alliance with an English force, Mohammed Aly had better luck. The French were driven out, Napoleon having returned two years earlier to pursue his own fortunes in France, and the Turkish Pasha appointed Mohammed Aly captain of his guards. Fighting first in alliance with the Mamelukes against the Turks, who had quarrelled with his Albanians, and then against the Mamelukes themselves, Mohammed Aly forced his way up, till in 1805 he was proclaimed Pasha by public acclamation, and in 1806 acknowledged by the Porte as virtual ruler of the country. It was the old story—a country riven in pieces by factions, and without a head or any efficient control from headquarters, fell like ripe fruit into the hand of the first strong man who could grasp the situation and the reward which it presented.

He was not long left in peace to enjoy it. It is generally forgotten now that his first fight was in 1807, with a British army of 4000 troops, whom he defeated. In 1808 he was ordered by the Porte



## COPPERSMITHS' BAZAAR, CAIRO

THE market of the coppersmiths and workers in brass and pewter is called the Sûk-el-Nahassin. Here copper dishes, pewter and brass jugs, water jars, coffee pots, and every conceivable utensil, all of graceful form and design, glow in the strong sunlight, and never fail to attract the admiration of all newcomers to Cairo. The owner of the shop invites his customer to be seated (always on the same level as himself), and if hopes are entertained of transacting satisfactory business, coffee is served at the expense of the shopkeeper, and if the deal is likely to take a long time, cigarettes are exchanged and fresh coffee supplied at intervals.





to send an army into the hinterland of Arabia to suppress the revolt of the Wahhabis, who were interfering with the pilgrimage routes to the holy cities. But Mohammed Aly was too far-seeing to strip his country of its defences until he knew that it might safely be left with some reasonable hope of peace. The most disturbing factor in the situation was the remnant of the Mamelukes, and after three years spent in vain attempts to conciliate or conquer them, he decided to dispose of them in another way, more questionable perhaps, but characteristically thorough and effective. Having invited them all to a great assembly in the Citadel, to celebrate the honouring of his son Toussoun before his departure on the Wahhabi campaign, he trapped them in the great rocky defile which forms the approach to the Citadel and ruthlessly shot them down. Not one survived, despite the picturesque tale associated with the spot known as the Mameluke's Leap, for every man who had entered the gates lay dead. Those who had not been present, including women and children, were pursued throughout the land, and all who could be hunted down shared the same fate.

It was a drastic remedy, too strong meat for modern stomachs, but pity would be wasted upon

the victims, who had never given any in their day and certainly would have been the last to expect it.

The disturbers of the peace removed, the war in Arabia brought to a successful conclusion, and his own seat in the throne rendered secure by these evidences of his power, Mohammed Aly set himself to develop the resources of the country, and it is here that the extraordinary foresight, energy, and statesmanlike capacity of the man shew themselves so strikingly. It must be remembered that Egypt then was relatively a howling waste—its great natural fertility almost forgotten in the carnival of misgovernment which had swept over it for centuries. The old irrigation works were almost wiped out, public security or confidence was simply non-existent, and the poor fellaheen, who cultivated the land without capital, without knowledge, except of traditional methods, and without spirit, were unable to make anything but a bare minimum of subsistence out of what was in reality the most fruitful soil in the world. It is indeed difficult to understand how Mohammed Aly, a semi-Oriental illiterate, for he only began to learn to read and write after he was forty, a rough soldier, and unacquainted with the developments of modern industry, can have conceived, or even had the

courage to adopt from others, the schemes for the development of the country which he now proceeded to put into execution. He was quick to avail himself of all the new learning that Europe, herself only beginning to be modern, could teach him. Realizing at once the futility of expecting the down-trodden fellaheen to do anything for themselves to improve the country, he proceeded to gather the whole control of the agricultural and industrial interests of the country into his own hands.

His handling of the new cotton industry was typical. The plant was brought to his notice in 1820 by a Swiss engineer, Jumel by name, who had found it growing as an ornamental shrub in a Cairo garden. Inspired by a faith in its possibilities which may well strike modern minds with surprise, Mohammed Aly threw himself into the cultivation of the new crop with characteristic energy, and proceeded to reconstruct the whole irrigation system of the Delta, from "basin" or flood irrigation to "perennial" irrigation by canals to suit it. It was, of course, useless to expect the small native growers to copy his faith. They did not know how to grow cotton nor where to find purchasers for it. Mohammed Aly ordered them to



grow it, and said that he would find purchasers, and he did. Not content with this, he proceeded to erect modern factories to deal with the raw material, and manufacture it for the country's use.

He rapidly gathered into his own hands large estates, and parcelled out desert or waste land among those of his followers who had the means and the sense to follow his own methods in improving it. According to his lights, he measured out impartial justice to his people, coaxing or pushing them along the path of enlightenment and improvement. If he was convinced that new things were good, he knew better than to waste time trying to persuade his subjects to adopt them. He ordered, and they obeyed. He gathered the whole industries of the country into his own hands, not, as has been often misrepresented, for his own aggrandisement alone, but because he knew the thing would not be done so well, or done at all, if he left it to private enterprise. When he began to realize the value of education, he did not wait for public opinion to follow him. He simply took the children by force and, literally at the point of the bayonet, drove them into school. And under it all Egypt flourished as she had never done within the memory of man.



## A GREY DAY ON THE NILE





But his great abilities very nearly proved his undoing. The authorities at the Sublime Porte were quick to recognize the power of their vassal and desired to make use of him, if not to suppress him. On the outbreak of the Greek Revolution in 1822 they appointed him Governor of the Morea, and called upon him to send the Egyptian fleet to assist them in suppressing the revolt. Thus came the battle of Navarino, where, in no quarrel of his own, Mohammed Aly's fleet was lost, and his wings severely clipped for a time.

In 1832, however, a new fleet built, Mohammed Aly determined to emulate the achievement of Greece in securing her freedom, and despatched an army, led by his eldest son Ibrahim, into Syria to attack the Sultan on his own ground. So successful was Ibrahim that he overran the whole of Syria and part of Asia Minor, and the victorious Egyptian army was practically at the doors of Constantinople when the intervention of England snatched the victory from his hand. After some years of discussion, varied by further desultory fighting with the Turks, Lord Palmerston took up a decisive attitude which left Mohammed Aly no choice but to retire to Egypt or fight England. For a short time he fought, but the result soon

forced him to accept his defeat and be content with the less ambitious position which had once been his goal. Abandoning Syria, which, under his oppressive rule, had become too hot to hold, the remnant of Ibrahim's army was allowed to retire to Egypt. By the Firman of 1841, which is the foundation of the present political status of Egypt, Mohammed Aly was given the hereditary Pashalik of Egypt, the tribute was fixed, and his relations to the Porte with regard to his army, etc., were definitely settled.

Embittered by this check, practically the first and only great defeat of his life, and ruined by the cost of the war, Mohammed Aly returned to his task of creating a new Egypt, but difficulties were thickening round him, and a few years later his mental powers began to fail. In 1848 Ibrahim, himself in very feeble health, had to take his place as Regent. His second son, Toussoun, had died in 1816. His third, Ismail, had been treacherously massacred at Shendy in the great expedition of 1820-22 to the Sudan, itself one of the great achievements of Mohammed Aly's reign. The motives which actuated him in this addition to his kingdom are variously stated. It was known that the country possessed a considerable caravan

trade which Mohammed Aly desired to get into his own hands, as he had already done with many of the industries of Egypt. It was also believed that the country contained gold. On the other hand, the reports of the anarchy and misrule which prevailed in the country, and the desire to introduce civilization on the upper reaches of the Nile, may well have weighed with him ; for Mohammed Aly had broad views of the future of Egypt, and probably realized, as well as it has ever been realized since, the common interest of all the territories which lay in the valley of the Nile. It is probable that he had also in view the possibilities of the Sudan as a recruiting ground for his new armies. These possibilities were afterwards diverted to a much more objectionable purpose, the development of the slave trade, which, as early as 1838, began to cause serious outcry. Sir John Bowring, an Englishman sent by the British Government to enquire into the state of Egypt, published a report drawing attention to the ghastly features of this trade—the same which afterwards took Gordon to Khartoum. Mohammed Aly himself paid a visit to the country in 1838, and formally declared the abolition of slavery, but his visit led only to a temporary improvement.



Mohammed Aly had begun in a small way the reconstruction of Cairo, which his grandson Ismail was to extend to the creation of practically a new city. The street which bears his name, Sharia Mohammed Aly, was driven in a straight line, regardless of all rights of property and of any architectural relics that stood in the way, from the Ataba el-Khadra to the mosque of Sultan Hassan in the square below the Citadel. This opened up a fine vista of the new mosque which he was erecting on the Citadel hill, modelled upon the famous mosque of St. Sophia in Constantinople. As the latter was originally a Christian church, the copy is entirely unlike any other Mohammedan mosque in Cairo, and its interest is due rather to its situation and to the tomb in which the remains of its founder are buried.

Almost his last public appearance in Egypt was in 1847, at the laying of the foundation-stone of the great Barrage, now known as the Cairo or Delta Barrage, to distinguish it from its numerous progeny. The way in which he took up and pushed through this great scheme of the Frenchmen, Bellefonds de Linant and Mougel Bey, was characteristic, as also perhaps was the fact that he proposed to use the stone from the Pyramids for



## SAILING-BOATS ON THE NILE

THE river is the high road for transport for the Egyptian. He scorns the railway, and hundreds of *giasas*, the large native sailing-boats, manned by only two or three men, bring down loads of *nbn*, cut straw, which is used for fodder, closely trodden and packed on overhanging beams until the boats look like sailing hay-stacks. Others are laden with scores of the native porous water jars made principally at Kenh, and, at certain seasons of the year sugar-cane, going to the factories, and cotton for export. There is no prettier sight in Egypt than to see a whole flotilla of *giasas* sailing up the Nile before a strong North wind.





its construction. Its fate was unfortunately also typical of that of many of his schemes, ruined by the failure of his successors to appreciate its merits and finally abandoned, a melancholy ruin, to await the re-appearance of a new and energetic race in the country.

On 2nd August 1849 Mohammed Aly died, predeceased, however, by Ibrahim the Regent, and leaving behind him a name which, in spite of what modern opinion may regard as blemishes, must be acknowledged as that of one of the great men of the nineteenth century, a man of great resource and determination, of extraordinary foresight, and, for his days and country, of most advanced views. A terror to evil-doers, an unscrupulous and blood-reckless Oriental, he was, without doubt, the founder of Modern Egypt. All the great forces which have shaped the country's history during that century may be traced to his reign. The overland route (precursor of the Suez Canal), opened by Waghorn in 1845, the introduction of cotton, now its staple crop, and the modern irrigation system are at once his best memorials and the chief factors in the subsequent history of the country under his descendants.

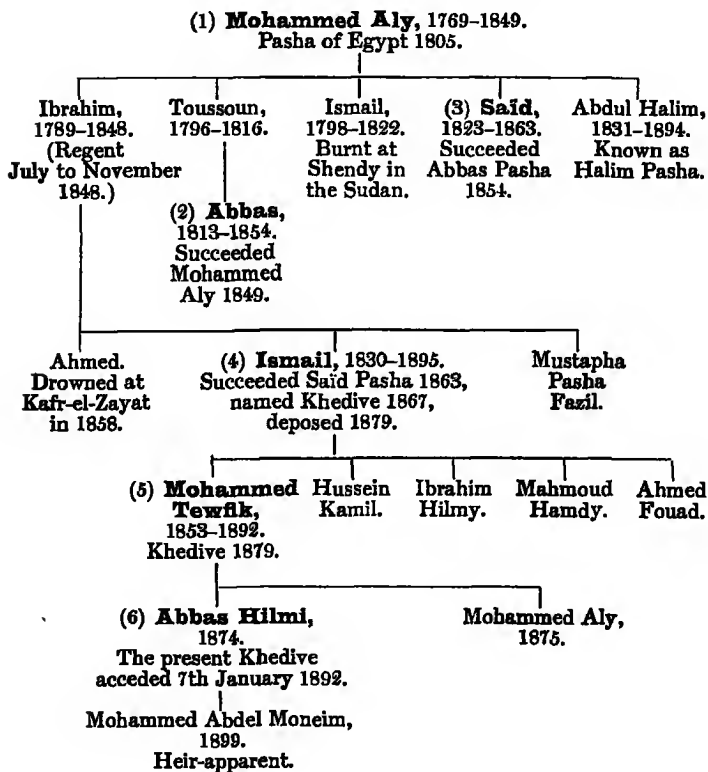
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### THE KHEDIVIAL DYNASTY



# **THE KHEDIVE ISMAIL**

**1868**





## CHAPTER VII

### THE KHEDIVE ISMAIL

1863

By Turkish law the succession to the Pashalik, instead of going by direct descent to the eldest son of the deceased eldest son, Ibrahim, went to the eldest surviving male of the family.<sup>1</sup> This happened to be Abbas, the eldest son of Toussoun, Mohammed Aly's second son, who, having been born in 1813, was actually ten years older than his uncle Saïd Pasha. On the death of the Regent (Ibrahim), in November 1848, Abbas had already succeeded him in that capacity, and in the few months before Mohammed Aly's death he had quickly shewn his views with regard to the policy he meant to adopt in governing the country. That policy may be described in one word as reaction. Everything that Mohammed Aly had done he proceeded to

<sup>1</sup> See Genealogy of the Khedivial Family, page 80.

undo ; indeed he never failed to express his contempt for the old Pasha and all his ways. He immediately cancelled the whole system of commercial monopolies which, in the later years of Mohammed Aly, had become a great instrument for the oppression of the country, and in order to get rid of the crowd of European concession-hunters, who pestered him persistently, he shut himself up in his palace at Shubra, refusing to see any one. His life became a mystery, but a brief one, for in 1854 he was murdered by two of his attendants.

His successor, Saïd Pasha, fourth son of Mohammed Aly, was again a complete change from his predecessor, and was everywhere hailed as a great improvement. Frank and genial in his nature, well educated in France, favourably disposed to foreigners and the advancement of his country, he yet left little mark on its history. He is only remembered as the granter of the concessions for the Suez Canal in 1854 and 1856, and his name would almost be forgotten were it not commemorated in that of the Mediterranean entrance of the great waterway, Port Saïd. Yet how few of those passing through the Canal, who note with interest the great statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps



## FISHING-BOATS ON THE NILE

As fish form an important article of food among the natives the fishing industry of the Nile is not unprofitable. The very small fish which abound in thousands in the reservoirs are especially prized, and are packed between layers of salt in large earthenware jars and preserved for months. The ability with which the fishermen throw their nets on the water is always a source of admiration, and so abundant are the smaller species of fish that the net is seldom hauled in empty.





on the breakwater at Port Saïd, will remember how that name came to be given to the port itself.

The story of the Suez Canal is too long to be told here, but it forms a curious connecting-link throughout the whole history of the present reigning dynasty in Egypt. For de Lesseps' claim on Saïd Pasha, which he pressed so persistently to success, was that his father, when French Consul in Kavalla, had rendered material assistance to the young lieutenant of Bashi-Bazouks, Mohammed Aly, who was then setting out for his first campaign in Egypt.

The arguments and promises by which de Lesseps gained the concession were that the Canal would give Egypt control over the trade between Europe and India, and that it would cost Egypt nothing, for it would be built with European capital. How sadly these promises were falsified is writ large in the history of Saïd's successors, for the Canal has been the undoing of Egypt, financially and politically. The payments which Ismail had to meet in connection with it were the chief excuse for his first great public debt, which in the end brought the European creditors into Egypt. But while this accumulation of debt is the outstanding



memorial of Ismail's reign, it is only fair to recall that he learned his first lesson from his predecessor. Saïd Pasha took the first step on the easy road of debt, as he did in the history of the Suez Canal. Ismail succeeded to his inheritance in both respects, and if he improved upon it, he was always ready to blame his predecessor's example.

The fact of Ismail's succession was itself something of an accident, his elder brother having met with a terrible death in 1858. Saïd Pasha had arranged to hold a great "fantasía" in Cairo, to which all the members of the family were invited. As many of them were at Alexandria at the time a special train was run to the capital, carrying the whole party. Ismail should have joined them, but whether from accident or secret knowledge on his mother's part of what was in the wind, he pled indisposition and stayed at home, luckily for himself. In these days there was no bridge over the Nile at Kafr-el-Zayat; but the trains were carried across bodily in a great ferry-boat, without the passengers having to alight. It is said that they were all busy in the saloons card-playing and continued their game. By some "accident," of the kind which so often happens in Oriental countries as to make one suspicious, the ferry was not in its place, or the



## THE NILE NEAR TEMEH





forward gates on board were left open, and the engine-driver unwittingly backed his train right over into the river.<sup>1</sup> Caught like rats in a trap, not a single one of the party escaped.

It was thus that on 18th January 1863 the famous, or infamous, Ismail Pasha came to the throne on the death of his uncle Saïd. He began his reign under the most fortunate auspices, and apparently with the best of intentions. In his speech to the representatives of the Powers who had come to pay their respects on his accession to the throne, he expressed sentiments which, for enlightenment and liberality, might have done credit to the new sovereign of any European nation. In particular, it is striking to recall his views with regard to the Suez Canal. "I am all for the Canal," he said, "but I want the Canal to be for Egypt, not Egypt for the Canal." How far he was from fulfilling these excellent intentions we shall shortly see, for the subsequent history of himself and the Canal is the history of his failure.

But while every historian of the time of Ismail has told the tale of his misdeeds and shortcomings, it would be unfair to leave the impression that his

<sup>1</sup> Like every other incident of these days, the different versions of this story are legion, not agreeing even as to the year in which it happened.

reign and his character were without redeeming features. On the contrary, it is hardly exaggeration to say that in his own way he was a worthy successor of Mohammed Aly—a real chip of the old block. He was a man of great ideas, ever ready to listen to schemes for the advancement of his country, which of course meant himself, for in these days it was literally a matter of course that the ruler of the country should regard the whole country as simply his own private estate. “L’État, c’est moi” would never have occurred to such a ruler as worth saying. It was simply the most commonplace statement of fact.

Where Ismail failed was in his utter lack of financial experience, especially in the methods of European financiers. His attitude may be compared to that still quite common among Egyptians, who believe that to sign a bill for an account is to extinguish the debt. To postpone the ultimate reckoning was with Ismail to forget the existence of the debt. He slid down the slope of bankruptcy without fear, never for a moment doubting his ability to stop himself when he chose, or to wriggle out of his responsibilities in some way which Oriental cuteness would suggest when the time came. Needless to say, his advisers were worse

than useless. Had they known any better than himself, or had they possessed sufficient honesty and power to force their advice upon him, they would have been of no use to him, and he would very quickly have dispensed with them. Nubar Pasha, the Armenian who carried through the arrangements for some of the earlier loans, was a case in point, though he reappeared on the scene at a later stage to assist the European controllers in the work of salvage. What Ismail wanted was men with the necessary ingenuity to discover and apply methods for carrying out his behests. Had he been under wise and strong financial control there is no saying what Egypt might have become, for the country possessed all the essentials of great prosperity; but it is idle to speculate, for it was only the financial mess into which he got the country that brought about that control—too late. It is not fair, however, to omit the other side of the picture, to which attention will be drawn in this chapter. The proper method to form a judgment on the reign of Ismail is to consider first what he did for Egypt, and then what it cost.

The early years of his reign were peculiarly fortunate in one respect. The American Civil War had created a cotton famine, which was the



beginning of a new era in Egypt. Not merely did it provide a market at famine prices for every pound of the Egyptian crop—the price is said to have risen to 52 dollars per *kantar* (100 lbs.), and it has since been as low as 7 or 8,—but it drew the attention of Lancashire to the peculiar quality of Egyptian cotton, and when the close of the war ended the famine, Egyptian cotton had created for itself a special market, which it has never since lost.

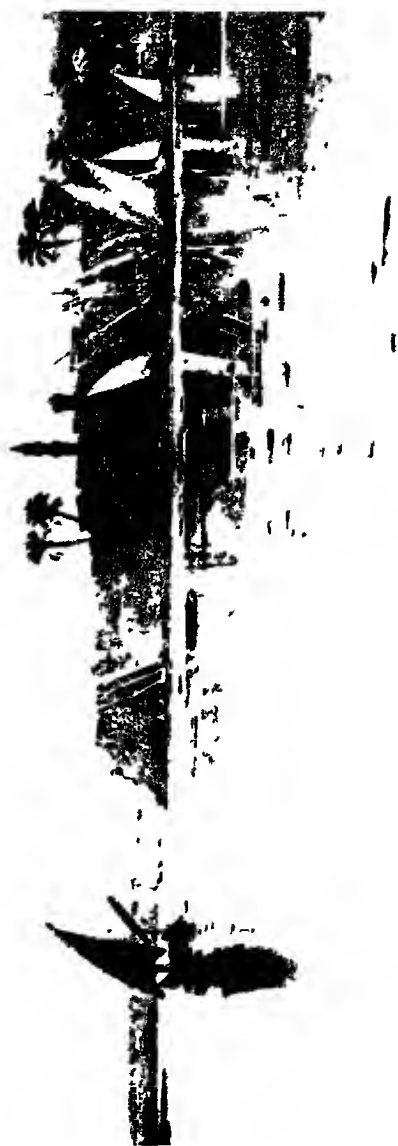
The result of the famine prices was an enormous increase in the sum realized for Egypt's exports, and as a matter of course Ismail immediately took steps to divert as much as possible of this new-found wealth into his own pockets. On coming to the throne he had been only a relatively small landholder. Following his grandfather's footsteps, he immediately proceeded to increase his estates by every possible method. Lands were bought, at prices fixed by the buyer, and which were not always paid. Confiscation on the most flimsy excuses was an every-day occurrence. The result was that in 1876 he owned about one-fifth of the whole cultivated area of Egypt, or nearly a million acres.

The fascination of history is to note how



## BALIANA

BALIANA, about 340 miles by river from Cairo, a town of some 8000 inhabitants, is generally known to travellers as the starting-point for the ride to the temple of Abydos. The narrow streets contain many charming old houses, with overhanging balconies and carved *mushrabeahs* which allow the inhabitants of the houses to gaze down to the street below without being seen themselves. From the river the large grove of palm trees to the north and the minarets of the mosques make it one of the most picturesque of the river towns.





one thing leads to another. These great estates required increased labour for their cultivation, especially on the more intensive lines which cotton cultivation demands. But the labour supply of the country was being drained by the *corvée* or forced labour which Saïd Pasha had undertaken to supply for the construction of the Suez Canal. Ismail was never at a loss to find an excuse for repudiating a bargain which it did not suit him to fulfil. The abuses to which this *corvée* had become subject were flagrant, and the oppression and sufferings of the labourers could not be denied. On the highest grounds of humanity and patriotism Ismail refused to tolerate these evils any longer. The slavery of Egyptians to the foreigner must be stopped, and the labour supply was withdrawn—with disastrous consequences to Egypt in the long run. At the same time Ismail cancelled the concession which had conferred upon the Canal Company all the land along the banks of the Canal, through the Wady Tumilat, carrying fresh water from the Nile to the Canal works. Ismail now calmly annexed these lands to his own domains, and snapped his fingers at the Company's protest.

Ismail's ambitions, however, were not purely material. He was determined to raise the status

of Egypt by securing for himself higher dignities from the Porte, and increase of territory. Further, he had set his heart upon getting the law of succession altered, so that his throne might go to his own children instead of to his uncle Halim Pasha, or his brother Mustapha Pasha Fazil, both of whom stood between his children and the succession. In all these plans he ultimately succeeded, though again at great expense. He obtained from the Porte in 1867 the title of Khedive or Viceroy. He had already in 1866 had Massowah and Suakim added to his kingdom, which were afterwards to prove so important to the Sudan, and obtained the desired alteration of the line of succession. Thereupon Halim and Mustapha were got out of the country, on various pretexts, and their lands added by forced sale to Ismail's *dairas*.<sup>1</sup> Halim's estate included the present site of the famous Shepherd's Hotel.

Nor was Ismail content to figure merely as an Eastern potentate or vassal of the Sultan. He desired to make an impression among European Powers as an advanced and enlightened ruler on their model, and the opening of the Suez Canal gave him the necessary opportunity. To the

<sup>1</sup> Estates, or domains.

opening ceremony he invited practically every crowned head in Europe, and many of them accepted his invitation or sent accredited representatives. The procession of ships of war, headed by that which carried the Empress Eugénie, bore such a freight of Western notables as had never before been seen in any Eastern land. The other celebrations of the great event were on the same scale. The great road built from the village of Giza to the Pyramids, a distance of over five miles in an absolutely straight line, was made for the one day of the Empress's visit, and a house specially built for her lunch still stands on the plateau at the foot of the Great Pyramid. The Opera House in Cairo was built, and the great opera of *Aida* specially written by Verdi to be played in it on the opening night. Nothing was lacking to complete the grandest entertainment ever seen.

His reward may be seen in the almost royal reception accorded to him when he subsequently paid visits of state to the capitals of Europe, and was received with acclamation and decorated with marks of royal favour. It was so even in England, which had held rather aloof from the Canal celebrations, as indeed it had done throughout



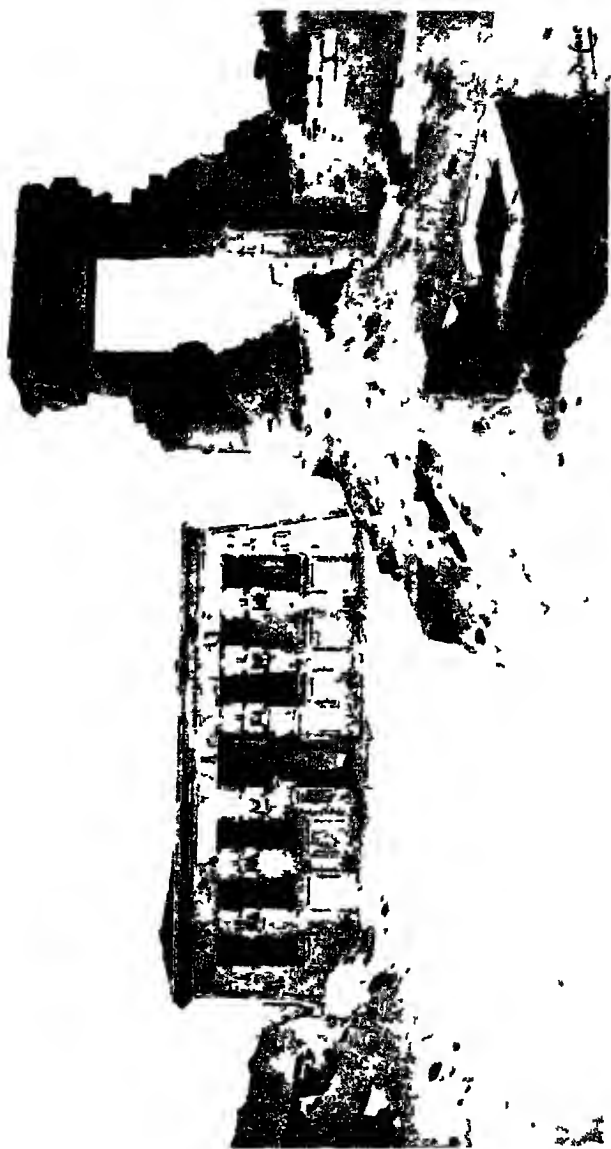
the whole business of the Canal from the first inception of the scheme. Having done their best to prevent the scheme going through at all, the British Government were naturally slow to give any official recognition to its success in spite of them.

About this time, too, Ismail was seized with the mania for building, and proceeded to Haussmanize Cairo; but fortunately he followed the example of his Arab predecessors by again planting his new city mainly on a new site. The new quarter, now known by his name, Ismailia, runs from the Ezbekieh Gardens or the Ataba-el-Khadra westward towards the Ismailia Canal, and became rapidly a smaller edition of Paris. Of palaces for himself he built an unprecedented number. The old palace of Mohammed Aly at Shubra was too far away from the new quarter for convenience, and a new one was built in the Abdin Square, which still stands, though entirely refaced in 1911-12. For residential purposes he had two new palaces built within a short distance of each other, one on the banks of the Nile at Gezira, afterwards the Gezira Palace Hotel, and the other at Giza, of which only the stables now survive, forming part of the School of Agriculture. Another



## DENDEREH

THE temple lies a short distance from the river and marks the site of the classical Tentyra where the goddess Hathor was worshipped. The wonderfully preserved temple now standing there is not of any very ancient date, belonging probably to the period of the later Ptolemies. Unfortunately the temple stands in desolate surroundings, surrounded by mounds of excavated rubbish. The temple itself is very complete. Hathor-headed columns support the roof, which is admirably coloured, and on the ceiling of the portico is the famous "Zodiac," added probably during the Roman period as it bears the names of Roman Emperors. Unlike their neighbours, the inhabitants of Kom Ombo, the natives of Tentyra held crocodiles in great abhorrence, and being said to be immune to any harm which might be caused by the hated animal, instead of erecting a temple in its honour spent their days in hunting and destroying it. The Isium is a small temple standing near the great temple, and near by is a somewhat ruined pylon.





relic of its glories, however, is the tessellated pavement and elaborate landscape gardening of the grounds now occupied by the Zoological Gardens at Giza.

Lastly, he again brought the Sudan under something like real obedience to Egypt. In 1869 he sent Sir Samuel Baker to explore and annex the regions round the source of the White Nile, which were first named by him "Ismailia," in honour of the Khedive, and are now part of the Equatorial Province. Fortunately Ismail was not content with the sending of an expedition to open up the country. From 1874 he really tried to make something of the country, and in 1876, most surprising of all his acts, he sent Gordon, then known as Chinese Gordon, to take over the governorship of the new province. In 1877 Gordon's commission was extended to that of Governor-General of the Sudan, thus not only for the first time bringing something like real civilization into the Sudan, but laying the foundations for future dramatic events in that country.

In little over a dozen years, Ismail had changed the whole face of the country, for, on the face of things at least, peace and prosperity had come to the country in a way that it had not known



## CHAPTER VIII

### EUROPE IN EGYPT

1875-1882

WHEN Ismail succeeded Saïd Pasha in 1868, he fell heir to a debt which may be estimated at about £10,000,000. A considerable part of this represented unpaid calls upon the Suez Canal shares, which Saïd had agreed to take up, to save the flotation from failure. When Ismail's affairs came under European investigation in December 1875, the total debt of Egypt amounted to nearly £100,000,000. The record of this gigantic accumulation of nearly £90,000,000 in twelve years is probably unique.

The earlier loans were raised upon terms which, considering the financial conditions of the time and the rather doubtful security of an Oriental country, were not excessive. But as every year the need for further loans became more pressing,



and the security less satisfactory, the terms went up, until the later loans were raised at prices which only the enormous risks run by the lenders could save from the accusation of sheer usury. But the facility with which, even up to the last, Ismail could raise money at a price, and his utter disregard of the cost and of the ultimate repayment, proved his ruin. As long as he could borrow money somehow, he did not care what it cost him, or how the money was ever to be repaid.

At first his excuse for new loans was the necessity of clearing off the legacy of debt left him by Saïd Pasha, and of meeting the calls upon the Suez Canal shares. But long ere these were paid off he had become involved in much greater claims by the Canal Company, which was by this time in dire straits. The withdrawal of the forced labour, as already described, and of the lands originally conceded to the Company, were made the basis of enormous claims. It is needless to go into the history of these in any detail. It is sufficient to say that in the end the Company's claims were referred for arbitration to, of all people, the Emperor Napoleon, who had all along been de Lesseps' chief backer in the scheme. The result was a foregone conclusion. Ismail was



## A GARDEN IN LUXOR





mulcted in heavy damages on every count of the claim, and the proceeds enabled de Lesseps to complete the canal. It is said that from beginning to end the Suez Canal cost Ismail roughly £16,000,000. Against this he held shares in the Canal with a face value of barely £4,000,000, and the Egyptian Government had a right to 15 per cent of the profits of the Canal.

Before the Canal was opened the Sultan had become alarmed at the heavy borrowings of his vassal, which were spoiling the market for his own transactions of the same kind. To many of them the Porte's formal consent had not even been asked, though it was necessary under the firmans; and as a matter of fact, during the opening ceremonies Ismail had in his pocket an ultimatum from the Porte, peremptorily forbidding the incurring of any further debt or the increase of the army or navy, and reminding him sharply of his position as a vassal of the Sultan.

Long ere this, however, Ismail had become familiar with the only way of managing the Porte. The title of Khedive, the alteration of the succession, and the grant of Massowah and Suakim had cost him, it is said, over £1,000,000 in *bucksheesh* to the numerous officials of the

Court, and an increase of the tribute from £364,000 to £675,000. Now he had only to repeat the same methods in order to secure a new firman in 1872, restoring and confirming all his old privileges, and giving him unlimited borrowing powers. With this he made his final plunge into European financial affairs, emerging with a great loan of £32,000,000, which was to consolidate and discharge all existing liabilities, and start him again with a clean sheet. But like many of its predecessors, though in rather worse degree, this great burden of new indebtedness realized such a miserable sum in net cash—only about £11,000,000, it is said—that it barely sufficed to clear off a few of the most pressing of his liabilities, and in a few months he was as bad as ever.

Needless to say, all this burden of debt involved very heavy charges for interest and repayments. Ismail's own expenses were heavy, for he had the most reckless way of ordering anything that took his fancy, no matter what it cost, and hosts of contractors were ever ready to tempt him with European improvements or novelties. After the close of the American Civil War his revenues of course suffered a severe set back, owing to the fall in the price of cotton, but he never attempted to





## THE TEMPLE OF LUXOR

UNTIL comparatively recently this temple was almost completely filled with the accumulated rubbish of centuries, on which stood a large number of mud houses. Thanks to the energy of M. Maspero, who carried out the work of excavating the temple, some idea of its original beauty and grandeur may now be obtained. Much still remains which might be cleared away, and a mosque stands on a mound of rubbish at the northern end of the temple.





curtail the expenditure. The administration of the finances was thoroughly Oriental, and gave rise to the usual amount of corruption. Everything was paid for three or four times over, in excessive or fictitious charges, and heavy losses due to delay in settlement of the accounts. Treasury bills were only accepted at discounts of as much as 30 per cent.

It is equally needless to say that the real burden of all this maladministration fell on the humble fellaheen, who paid the taxes. The methods by which these were collected, and the nature of the taxes themselves, almost pass belief in their enormity. There was simply no vestige of just principle or honest method. Every official, from the Finance Minister himself downwards, extorted as much as he possibly could from those below him, who in turn resisted the extortion by every possible means. Nobody had the least idea what taxes were really due, or when, or what they ought to amount to. Taxes were often collected a year in advance, *i.e.* twice in one year. There was only one final test of ability to pay, and that was ability to bear the bastinado or the *kourbash* (whip) without confessing to the possession of further means, on which the money-lender who stood by would be prepared to advance further funds for the tax collector.

As the pressure of the creditors increased, the screw was tightened on the fellaheen till many of them were driven from their lands by mortgage or worse means, to become day-labourers on the estates of wealthy pashas and great landlords, like the Khedive himself. The very excess of oppression had defeated itself.

By the opening of the year 1875 the end was fast approaching. Ismail had already pledged to the hilt every specific asset he could lay hands upon, including his own (so-called) *dairas* or estates. Every possible piastre had been squeezed out of the fellaheen, and the floating debt of the State was mounting dangerously. At his wits' end to find a further asset to pledge, he bethought himself of the Suez Canal shares, which were then almost unmarketable, for the dawn of success had not yet broken upon the venture. Privately they were hawked round every financial agency that might be tempted to lend money upon them, and were even offered for sale outright. The British representative in Egypt came to hear of it, and promptly advised his chiefs at home. The famous *coup* by which Disraeli, on his own authority and with the aid of the Rothschilds, secured them for the British Government is now too well known to

require retelling. But from that date (November 1875) we trace England's direct connection with Egyptian affairs. It was followed by an attempt to persuade England to purchase also the 15 per cent share of profits; but Disraeli knew he had already gone as far as he could expect Parliament to approve, and he declined the offer. They were afterwards pledged to a Banking Syndicate, and in the long run lost to the Egyptian Government for a sum, it is said, of £800,000. Thus for less than five millions Ismail and Egypt lost their whole interest in the Canal, which is said to have cost them sixteen.

The amount received for the shares was only a momentary stopgap, and Ismail must have felt that he had come absolutely to the end of his tether. His next move was to apply to the British Government for the assistance of a trained official to enquire into the state of the Egyptian finances. Thus came about the mission of Mr. Stephen Cave,<sup>1</sup> whose famous Report became the basis of all the prolonged negotiations, which finally led to the liquidation of the bankrupt estates of Egypt and her Khedive.

<sup>1</sup> It is said that Disraeli's real object in sending Cave out was to ascertain Ismail's true position, with a view to a possible British guarantee of the debt in return for a British Protectorate over Egypt, but the huge amount of Ismail's liabilities scared Disraeli.

It is a long tale, too long to be told here even in outline; but out of it arose in course of time a new Egypt, with a new Constitution and a new ruler. The extraordinary ingenuity with which Ismail played his many parts through the whole mass of negotiation and intrigue is as fascinating as any novel. Cornered repeatedly by sheer force of circumstances and weight of the Powers' demands, none knew better how to yield gracefully when resistance was no longer possible, and to give apparently cordial support and assistance to the new regime. But no sooner was a new arrangement set upon its way than the old fox was at it again, intriguing and undermining, and again and again he succeeded in bringing to nought the most elaborate and apparently sound constructions of those who were trying to control him and restore his finances. But gradually, point by point, he was forced to yield and disgorge. He saved himself in 1876 by making a scapegoat of his chief ally Ismail Sadyk, known as the *Mufettish* (Inspector), who, as Minister of Finance, had been his chief instrument in the later years of his wild financial career. The *Mufettish* disappeared only the day before Mr. Goschen's Conversion scheme was published, and to this

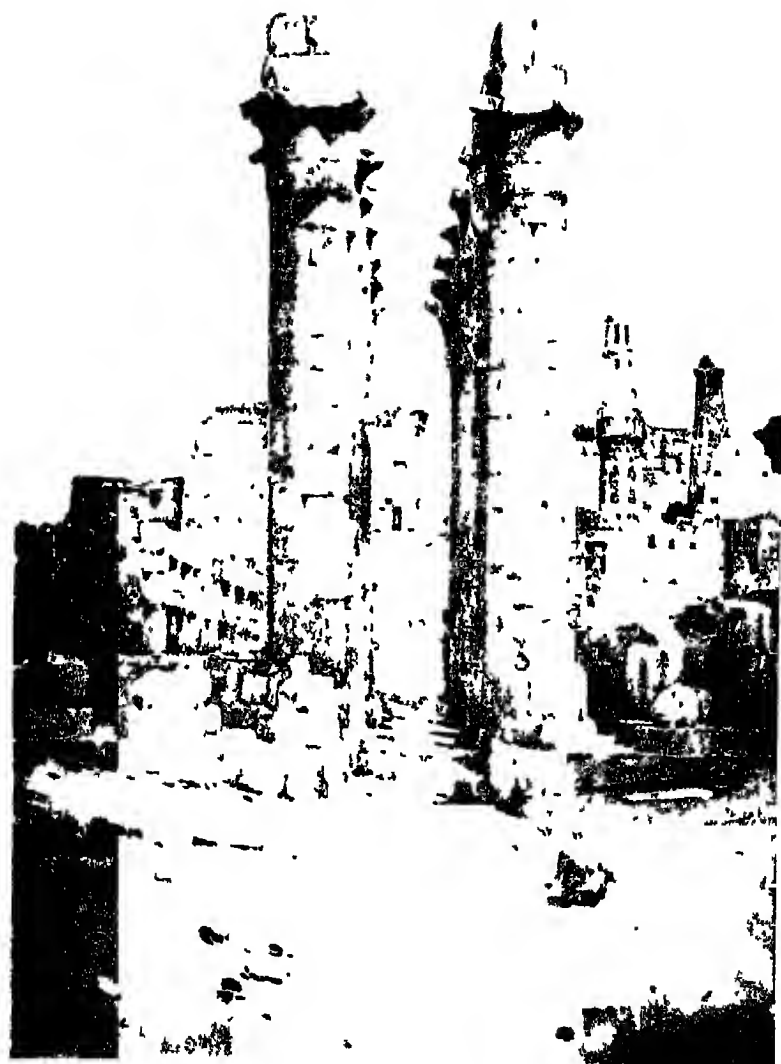




## THE COLONNADE, TEMPLE OF LUXOR

THIS colonnade with its massive lotus columns belongs to part of the original building of Amenhotep III. Rameses II. did much to add to the splendours of the temple. He built a large courtyard and colonnade with colossal statues surrounding it, and the two granite obelisks, one of which now stands in the Place de la Concorde in Paris.

The temple suffered great damage from the hands of the Christians, who turned sections of it into churches, and in their ignorant fanatical zeal smashed statues, wrecked shrines, and wrought general havoc. In the fourteenth century a mosque was built by the descendant of a Mohammedan saint in the large courtyard, and to this day a small mosque stands on the top of an unexcavated portion of the temple.





day the manner of his death is disputed, though it was almost certainly violent. In 1878, having upset the Goschen scheme, Ismail again found himself at bay before a new Commission of Enquiry, which, inspired by one of his own former Ministers, Nubar Pasha, again proved too much for him. He was compelled then to give up the whole of the family *dairas* or domains, which he had accumulated and placed in the names of various members of his family. These were surrendered to the State, so that at least some part of the proceeds of the State funds squandered by him were recovered.

But Ismail never knew when he was beaten. Still convinced that he could outwit the foreigners, he, by what practically amounted to a *coup d'état*, again succeeded in throwing off his shackles, dismissed Nubar Pasha and Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, the English Finance Minister, and set up again a Constitution and a Ministry which were only the thinnest disguise of his own absolute power. For a time it almost seemed as if he had succeeded in bluffing all the Powers of Europe. The British and French Governments seemed so afraid of each other that neither would make the first step, till suddenly the knot was cut by the

threat of decisive action on the part of Germany. Then Ismail's fate was sealed. Deposed on 26th June 1879 by the Sultan, in favour of his despised eldest son Mohammed Tewfik, whom he had never intended to be his heir, he was allowed to leave the country with his huge household and, it was said, a considerable secret treasure. He moved about from place to place in Europe, and finally to Constantinople, where, after eight years of practical imprisonment, he died in 1895.

It is a sad tale of misdirected abilities, for ability of a peculiar kind Ismail certainly had. One cannot help feeling some sympathy for the wily Oriental matching all his powers and experience against a new race of opponents, whose powers he so sadly miscalculated. In matters of finance the pen is mightier than the sword. Obligations weighed lightly upon the despotic ruler of an Eastern land, who could fulfil or evade them in his own way, but the ways of European financiers were too much for him, and in spite of all his twists and turnings he was beaten in the end. If in any sense Egypt is part of Europe now, it was literally his doing, not because of his good deeds, but because, by his financial misdeeds, he compelled all Europe



## THE TEMPLE OF LUXOR, FROM THE WEST BANK OF THE NILE

THE temple of Luxor was built by Amenhotep III. about B.C. 1500, in honour of the God Amen, and there seems to be little doubt that it was connected with Karnak by a paved road, lined on either side by a row of rams. The building underwent many changes. Amenhotep's heretic son caused all traces of the God Amen to be erased from the temple, and erected a shrine in honour of Aten. Rameses II. made many additions, but the temple suffered much at the hands of the Persians. The Ptolemies during their rule restored it to something of its former glory, but the great earthquake of B.C. 27 wrought havoc here.







in the first place, and England in the long run, to take the management of the country out of his hands and place it under a government, less picturesque, less Oriental, but more in accordance with Western notions of the sanctity of contracts and the literal fulfilment of financial obligations.

*Story of the Khedivate*, by Edward Dicey, 1902. (Rivington's.)

For the history of the debt and of taxation in Egypt, see the present writer's *Political Economy for Egyptian Students*, 1910. (Wm. Hodge & Co.)



# **THE BRITISH OCCUPATION**

*f*

**1882-1885**



## CHAPTER IX

### THE BRITISH OCCUPATION

1882-1885

It is commonly thought in England that the regeneration of Egypt dates from the British occupation in 1882, but this is not quite a fair statement of the case. As a matter of fact, most of the reforms, which will be described in a later chapter, were actually put through in the years after 1882, but many had been begun as far back as the days of Ismail himself, while others had been planned, and were only prevented by the troublous times before the occupation from being put into execution. The one man to whom credit is primarily due for the regeneration of Egypt is Nubar Pasha. It was he who originally conceived the idea of the Mixed Courts, established in 1876, which provide a system of international courts of justice for the settlement of all disputes between

Egyptians and foreigners, or between foreigners of different nationalities in Egypt—a very necessary thing in such a polyglot country.

But the master-stroke was the way in which the Khedive himself was made subject to these courts, whose European judges he could not appoint though he had to pay their salaries.<sup>1</sup> It is almost certain that he was not aware of this power of the courts when he agreed to their erection. When he did realize it, and it was very soon, for actions against the Government sprang up like mushrooms, he simply ignored them; but it was perhaps well for Nubar Pasha that he was out of Egypt at the time.

Nubar had left the country, practically in exile, during the Cave Mission early in 1876, and had therefore no part in the setting up of the Caisse de la Dette, which was established in May of that year as an international committee of creditors to guard the interests of the bond-holders. He returned, however, in 1878, in time to become the first constitutional Prime Minister of Egypt in the short-lived Ministry of 1878-79. Before accepting that office, however, he had carried out the

<sup>1</sup> But now, thanks to registration fees and the increased value of land, the Egyptian Government actually derives a net revenue of over £500,000 per annum from the Mixed Courts.





## THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK

THE great pylon of gigantic dimensions, begun during the days of the Ptolemies but never completed, was intended to form a fitting entrance-gate to the great temple of Karnak. It led into the great Court containing the smaller temples of Sety II. and Rameses III., and a smaller pylon formed the approach to the famous hall of columns, which has been so admirably restored of late years that it is now possible to form some idea of its grandeur in ancient days. The smaller of the two obelisks which remain standing is the only one left of the four erected by Thotmes I. The large obelisk is one of the two erected by Queen Hatshepsut. They were composed of Assuan granite, and their points were ornamented with gold and silver.

10-10-10

10-10-10





negotiations with Ismail which resulted in the surrender of the domains. Indeed, the astonishing thing about Nubar's achievements is the way in which he handled Ismail; but even he could not prevent the Khedive from undermining everything as fast as it was built up. It soon became evident that any final or real reform in Egypt was impossible as long as Ismail remained in the country—hence his deposition.

Once he was out of the way, further reforms which had long been in view were pushed forward. The system of taxation was crying out for a thorough overhaul, and a first instalment, in the form of a sweeping repeal of a host of petty and ridiculous imposts, was effected in January 1880. The most striking thing about some of these taxes was that nobody knew how they ever came to be imposed. Many of them were attributed to an *ordre supérieur*, which simply meant that *somebody* had ordered them, but it never seemed to occur to anybody to ask "Who?" or "By what authority?" In many cases it was proved that subordinate officials of an inventive turn of mind had discovered new taxes and applied them in their own districts, and if the Minister of Finance happened to hear of it he promptly adopted the idea and applied it generally.

Sir Evelyn Baring, afterwards Lord Cromer, had then just returned to Egypt. Originally appointed English Commissioner of the Public Debt under the Goschen scheme of November 1876, he had come through all the struggle with Ismail, but left Egypt just before his deposition. Returning now as the representative of England on the Dual Control, he took up the task of reform again under very different conditions; but in June of the same year he received an appointment in India, and handed over his work in Egypt to Sir Auckland Colvin, who had succeeded him at the Caisse de la Dette.

Very little could be done, however, until the whole financial situation had again been cleared up; and this was effected, after the appointment of another Commission, by the Law of Liquidation of 1880. For the third time, therefore, a supposed final settlement of the situation had been arrived at, and the end of Egypt's troubles ought to have been really in sight this time. Further reforms were immediately pushed forward. A Commission on the Currency was appointed. Irrigation projects were under discussion. Retrenchment and economy were the rule in all administrations, and under the prudent acquiescence of the new Khedive



## THE PYLON OF HATSHEPSET AT KARNAK, FROM THE SACRED LAKE

AMONG the great works of Queen Hatshepset, the builder of the temple of Der-el-Bahri, is the VIIIth pylon in the temple of Karnak. Though it is one of the oldest monuments at Karnak, it is comparatively well preserved. The reliefs on the façade have suffered considerable alteration during different reigns, thus Thotmes II. erased the *cartouche* of the Queen, and later Amenhotep II. destroyed the reliefs, which were restored with alterations by Sety I. There were six colossal statues of kings against the façade; those on the west are the best preserved, but most of them have suffered considerable mutilation. The Sacred Lake was called Birket-el-mallâha or salt lake, as its waters are salt, due, no doubt, to the excessive amount of salt which is found in the soil on which Karnak is built.







Tewfik things were once more apparently moving steadily up-hill against the weight of bankruptcy.

But Egypt's difficulties were not over yet; indeed, the worst was still to come. This time the trouble began with the army, though there were many who believed that the real cause, as before, might be traced back to the old source, the intriguing of the deposed Khedive. In any case, the fact was that a section of the army, dissatisfied with the sweeping reductions of the establishment, which had been made on the grounds of economy, practically mutinied, and in a few months found that they could dominate the situation. A leader, Arábi Pasha, was soon found, though he was really only a puppet in the hands of cleverer men behind the scenes. The Khedive proved hardly equal to the situation, which might have been saved at an early stage by a bolder policy; but he is hardly to be blamed for that. The immediate cause of the subsequent events was, as usual, an accident. On 11th June 1882 a casual quarrel between an Egyptian donkey-boy and some low-class Greeks in Alexandria proved the spark which set fire to the very inflammable state of public feeling. Serious rioting broke out, and many Europeans were killed, under circumstances which, it was alleged, pointed

to a curious slowness of the authorities to take action. The trouble spread throughout the country and became too serious to be passed over. Arábi utterly failed to grasp the seriousness of the situation as regards the foreign Powers. Misled by his own wrong-headed notions of his power of resistance, as well as by certain English friends who assured him that England and France would not attack him, he persisted, in spite of the requests of the admirals of the British and French fleets now lying off Alexandria, in going on with the erection of batteries along the coast. Finally on 11th July, exactly one month after the date of the rioting, the bombardment of Alexandria took place, but by the British fleet alone, for the French fleet, acting under orders from their Home Government, had sailed away, declining to take part.

When, therefore, the brief campaign was over, the Alexandrian forts silenced, the town burnt by Arábi's retreating forces, and these forces finally scattered by Sir Garnet Wolseley at Tel-el-Kebír, a new situation had arisen. Through all the previous attempts at reconstruction England and France had stood side by side, and had with scrupulous care divided the duties and responsibilities of the work between them ; so scrupulously



## THE GATEWAY OF EUERGETES, KARNAK

A short avenue with ram-headed sphinxes on either side, branching off from the long avenue of sphinxes which originally led from Karnak to Luxor, leads to the gateway of Euergetes, beyond which lies the magnificent temple begun by Rameses III. and dedicated to Khonsu. The walls of the pylon are richly ornamented with reliefs showing Euergetes offering sacrifices to the different gods of Thebes, and the temple itself is one of the finest of the Egyptian monuments built at that epoch. It received additions in the reign of Rameses XII., who built eight fresh columns and the short avenue of sphinxes which leads from the gateway to the temple.



St. Dufour



indeed that it is alleged by certain critics that if there were doubt as to which nationality should be given a particular office, the difficulty was met by creating another office—at the expense of the Egyptian taxpayer—for the other candidate, lest offence should be taken by either nation. This could hardly continue now. England had pulled the chestnuts out of the fire, and soon made it clear to the French Government that she considered herself quite capable of dividing them without assistance. The Dual Control was abolished, and the British representative took over the responsibility of guiding the Government. France protested, but her situation was too obviously untenable, and the disappointed Frenchmen in Egypt—there was no *entente cordiale* then—had to confine themselves to hostile criticism of everything that the new Government did.

A special mission under Lord Dufferin was sent out to examine and report upon the condition of the country, and to suggest the form of its future government. On the completion of this mission the direction of affairs was again placed in the hands of Sir Evelyn Baring, who returned to Egypt as British Agent in September 1883. It is characteristic of the paradoxical nature of things



in Egypt that his real post is one which theoretically does not exist. "Her British Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt," to quote the full title, is merely one of a number of similar representatives of the Powers, sent there, quite outside even of the consular service with which they have no connection, to keep an eye on the interests of the country they represent. When Great Britain assumed a controlling interest in Egypt she, again characteristically, refrained from taking any constitutional step which would in any way affect the nominal independence of the country, or rather its nominal condition as a part of the Turkish Empire. It was not England's policy to do so then, even if France's policy would have been likely to allow us to do so. But while Egypt was thus endowed with the whole machinery of a constitutional regime, Council of Ministers, General Assembly, Legislative Council, Provincial Councils, and all the rest of it, it had to be arranged that the real guiding hand behind the scenes was a responsible British official. The hand was that of Sir Evelyn Baring who, as a member of the British diplomatic corps, appointed and paid by the British Foreign Office instead of by the Egyptian Government as before, and holding no position or title of any kind under the Egyptian

Government, was in reality himself the head of that Government. The tale of how he fulfilled the duties of that anomalous position will fill another chapter.

The peculiar position of Egypt, and especially the way in which the administration of her finances was hampered by the Capitulations and the Caisse de la Dette, frequently made it possible to offer opposition more effective than mere criticism. These Capitulations are grants of special privileges to foreigners living in the Ottoman Empire, and, among other things, they prevent the imposition of taxes on foreign subjects without the consent of their Powers. To obtain such consent in these days took too much time and trouble, and as it was obviously unfair to impose taxes on natives and not on foreigners, the result was that it was impossible to impose new taxes at all, or even to reform the abuses of existing taxes.

The finances of the Government were, of course, once more at the very lowest ebb. The actual cost of the war, the indemnities for the destruction of Alexandria, and the necessary cost of improvements such as irrigation made it simply impossible to balance the budget ; and after a few years' struggle the matter was brought to a head, and another Con-

ference of the Powers had to be held. Once more a final settlement of the debtor's affairs was adjusted, under what was known as the London Convention of 1885, the Powers for the first time lending a direct helping hand by guaranteeing a new loan of £9,000,000 to tide the country over its difficulties.

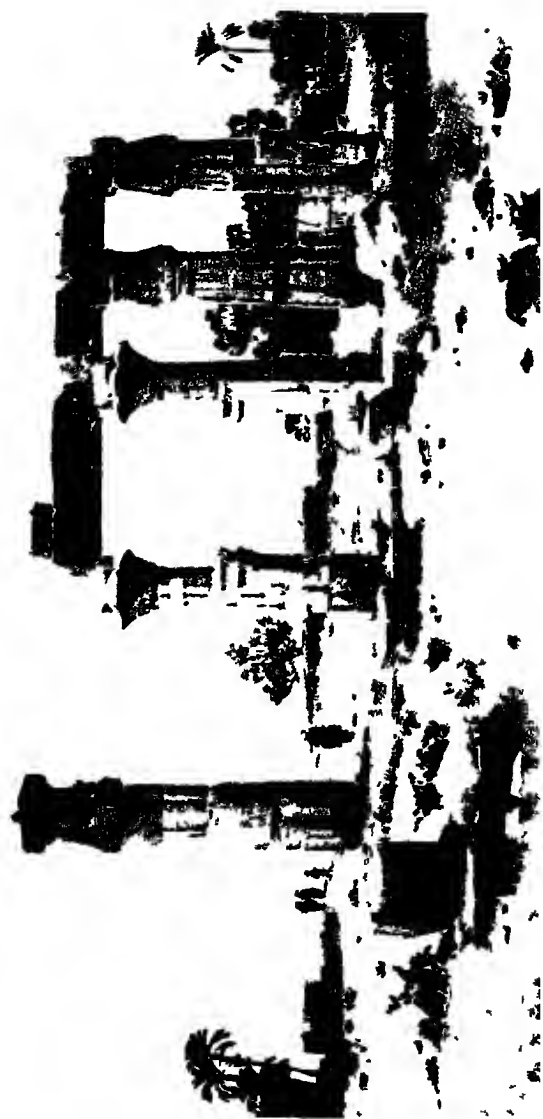
One other bad debt requires, however, to be cleared off before beginning to consider the final regeneration of Egypt, viz. the loss of the Sudan, not only from its own tragic interest, but because of its effects, financial and political, upon the position of Egypt herself ever since.

The first problem that faced the British Agent after the occupation was what to do with the Sudan. The instructions he received from the Home Government were to do nothing; Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal Government had been dragged very unwillingly into interfering with the affairs of Egypt, but they were determined not to be dragged an inch farther. The policy was natural enough, but unfortunately the case was one of those in which to do nothing is impossible. At that moment the Egyptian Government was fitting out two separate expeditions against the Sudan, where a new Mahdi had arisen, taking advantage of the unsettled state of affairs in Egypt, and was



## MEDAMUT

THE ruins of the temple of Medamut, dedicated to Mont, the god of war, lie some six miles to the north of Thebes. It belonged to the Ptolemaic period and was originally entered by a pylon which is now ruined, and only five of the fine columns of the central hall remain standing. The two centre columns which have floral capitals support an over-door of red granite, bearing the figure of Amenhotep II, sacrificing the head of a falcon to the god of war.





rapidly clearing the forms of Egyptian government out of the country. Mr. Gladstone declined even to be consistent in his policy of doing nothing, by forbidding the Egyptian Government to do anything. He simply declined to interfere. The expeditions started, and were disastrously wiped out, Hicks Pasha's, almost to a man, near el Obeid (about 300 miles south of Khartoum) in November 1883, and Valentine Baker Pasha's near Tokar, on the Red Sea coast, in February 1884. The Egyptian troops proved worse than useless. At the enemy's first charge they simply bolted.

There was nothing left now to do in the Sudan but to withdraw the Egyptian garrisons and evacuate the country; but that of itself had become a very difficult thing to do, for the whole country now swarmed with the enemy. The Mahdi's methods were simple but thorough. When he overran a new district, the inhabitants knew that their only choice was to join him or be exterminated. There was every reason to adopt the former alternative. A holy war will always command the loyalty of the natives to whom the appearance of *the* Mahdi, the true Messiah, is a matter of daily expectation. The Sudan had never owed any real allegiance to Egypt, for the Egyptians are a different race of



*soi disant* white men who regard the Sudánis as "niggers"; the word Sudan means the land of the black men.

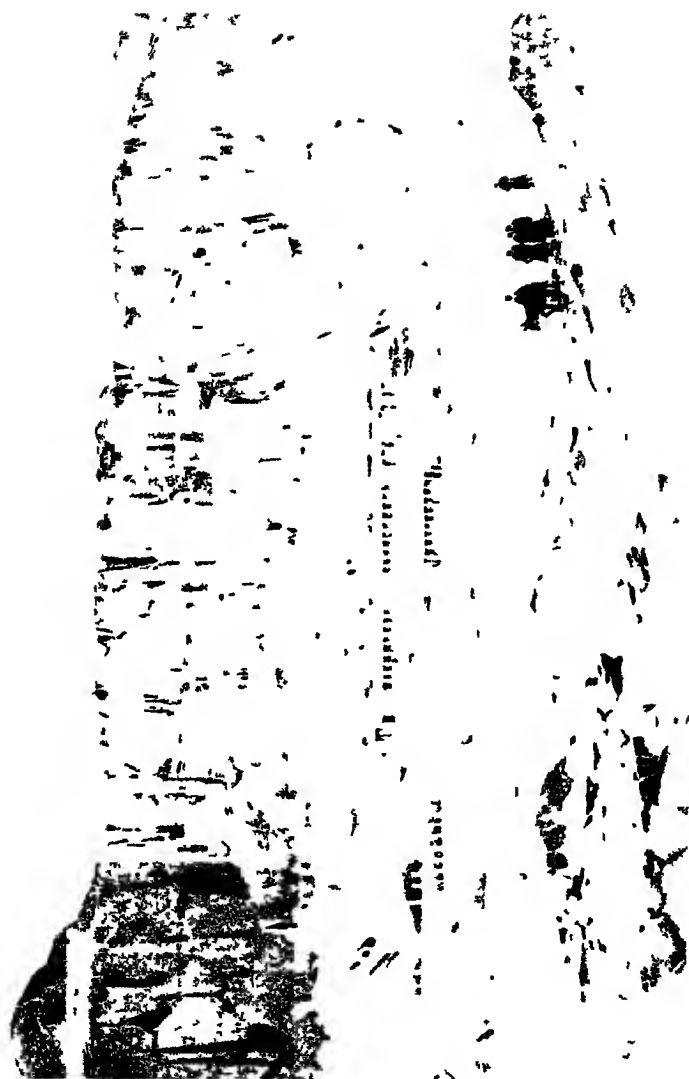
Fanned by these early successes over Egyptian troops, even under English officers, revolt spread like wildfire over the whole country, and soon the Egyptian garrisons in the remote centres were virtually prisoners within their walls. Humanity, however, insisted that an attempt must be made to get them out.

It is not desirable to open up an old controversy; the facts may be stated only as they bear upon the present position of Egypt. Gordon was chosen to do the work, and the choice was in some respects unfortunate. He had not been long in Khartoum before he found it impossible to withdraw all the garrisons; but to leave them to their fate was simply impossible to a man of Gordon's chivalrous character. These men knew him from his previous service in the country as Governor-General under the Khedive Ismail. It had always been his pride to teach them that his word was to be trusted, and he had pledged it now that he would relieve them. But besides that, he was strongly against evacuation. He knew what it would mean for the Sudan to be left with no government but the Mahdi, and, on the



## DER-EL-BAHRI

QUEEN HATSHEPSET when she constructed Der-el-Bahri, *i.e.* the Northern Monastery, conceived a unique plan for her temple, as no other temple of that epoch was built in three distinct terraces. She also chose a perfect site, as the building lies in a semi-circular wall of the towering cliff which divides this valley from the celebrated Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. Like many other temples at Thebes, this appears to have been a funerary temple, and to have been built on holy ground by the Queen, during her lifetime, in order that on appointed days of festival offerings might be made to her *ka* or double, and to her father, Thotmes I. The Queen's name was erased from all inscriptions by her ward, Thotmes III., and many acts of vandalism were enacted by Amenhotep IV. The temple was approached by a long avenue of sphinxes, but little trace now remains of them.





other hand, he believed that if the Government would only give him a little assistance he could "smash the Mahdi"—the words are his own. So he practically refused to carry out his instructions, and paid the utmost penalty with his own death on 26th January 1885, two days before the advance party of the relief expedition reached Khartoum. *Punch's* famous cartoon "Too Late" struck the keynote of the whole ghastly business. After all, the relief expedition had to be withdrawn and the Sudan evacuated; and it probably cost more to do so than it would have cost originally to recover the country. Then after thirteen years of recuperation, during which the Egyptian army was literally remade, the Sudan had to be conquered all over again, and in 1898 it was added once more, but with a difference this time, to the kingdom still nominally ruled by the dynasty of its first conqueror, Mohammed Aly. By a strange turn of fate, the man who remade the Egyptian army, the man who "smashed the Mahdi" or his successor the Khalif, the victor of Omdurman, is now the virtual ruler of Egypt—Lord Kitchener of Khartoum.

*Modern Egypt*, by Lord Cromer, 1908. (Macmillan.)

*England in Egypt*, by Lord Milner, 11th edn., 1904. (Ed. Arnold.)

*The Making of Modern Egypt*, by Sir Auckland Colvin, 1906. (Seeley & Co.)



# **REGENERATION**

**1885-1904**





## CHAPTER X

### REGENERATION

1885-1904

ONCE more the tale opens with financial difficulties, but this time with the gratifying result of final success. The arrangement made in 1885 had admittedly been a last chance, and was generally regarded as a forlorn hope. Indeed, Nubar Pasha from the first had no hope of final success, and the result actually achieved was a triumph for Lord Cromer. The gist of the 1885 Convention was that the Egyptian Government was to be allowed certain relief in regard to the obligations to the Caisse de la Dette for three years. If by the end of 1888 they were not in a position to make up the temporary leeway thus given, the whole situation was again to be considered by the Powers, and there is little doubt that the result would have been an entire alteration of Egypt's political status.

Lord Cromer, however, was determined to pull the country through, and to this end the strictest economy was entailed on every department; some of the English officials even volunteered to assist by personal sacrifices of part of their salaries. Details would take too long, but, in a word, the efforts made were successful, and, thanks to a number of financial expedients<sup>1</sup> which almost no other stress of circumstances would have warranted, Lord Cromer's optimism was justified. The close of 1888 marked the final turning of the corner and the beginning of the end of Egypt's financial difficulties. The rest of this period is one of continuous steady progress in spite of many difficulties. Not the least of these were due to the control of the Caisse de la Dette, which, originally devised in the interests of the creditors, had become merely a hindrance to the free use of the increasing assets of the Government.

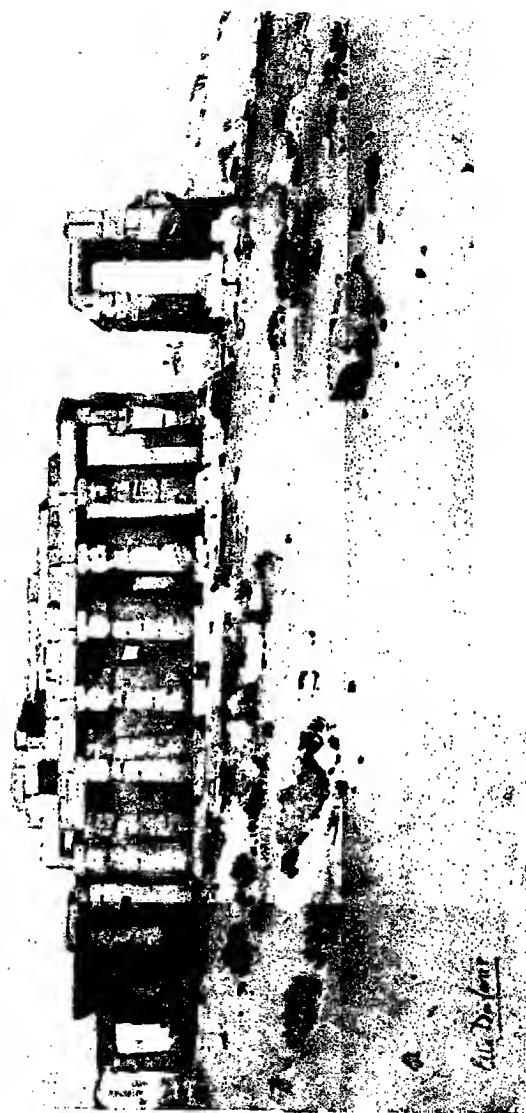
The Commission on the Currency had been re-appointed in 1884, and their Report was made the basis of a sweeping reform in 1885, which practically created a new national currency in all except

<sup>1</sup> For example, on 31st December 1887 there was not enough money left in the Treasury to pay the month's salaries. By postponing payment till the next day this sum was carried into the following financial year, and the accounts of 1887 made to shew a surplus.



## THE RAMESSEUM

THE Ramesseum lies on the edge of the desert to the east of Kurnet Murrai. In spite of its ruined condition, it is very fine and impressive, as indeed was all the work of Rameses II. The magnificent columns which remain standing give some idea of the grandeur of the temple when it was in its entirety. Cambyses is said to be responsible for the overthrow and mutilation of the colossal granite statue of Rameses which stood in the second court. Two pylons originally guarded the front of the temple ; both are now in a ruined condition. On the walls of the temple, and on the face of the second pylon, are sculptured scenes showing the king slaying his enemies in various battles ; in one especially he is to be seen hurling them into the Orontes near Kedesb.





gold. The peculiar international status of Egypt was reflected in the character of her gold currency, which was made up of English, French, Turkish, and Egyptian coins, all being legal tender at rates originally fixed in the time of Mohammed Aly. Owing to slight discrepancies between these rates and the actual bullion value of the coins, the action of well-known economic causes produced the peculiar result that the English sovereign drove the others out of Egypt and became the established gold currency of the country. The result may in later years have given offence to certain purely sentimental feelings of the Nationalists, but its financial advantages to the country were undoubted.

At the same time the reform of taxation was steadily proceeding. Every opportunity of a possible surplus was taken to remit some oppressive or ridiculous tax, many of which stood condemned for the worst of all offences in a tax, that the cost of collection was out of all proportion to the revenue derived from the tax.

But the most oppressive tax of all and that which gave greatest difficulty in reform was the *corvée* or forced labour, a very real tax upon the people, and one which, through its inequitable and





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But the most oppressive tax of all and that which gave greatest difficulty in reform was the *corvée* or forced labour, a very real tax upon the people, and one which, through its inequitable and

oppressive imposition, had been one of the worst abuses of Ismail's government. The chief necessity for this tax was due to the system of canal irrigation, which requires some explanation.

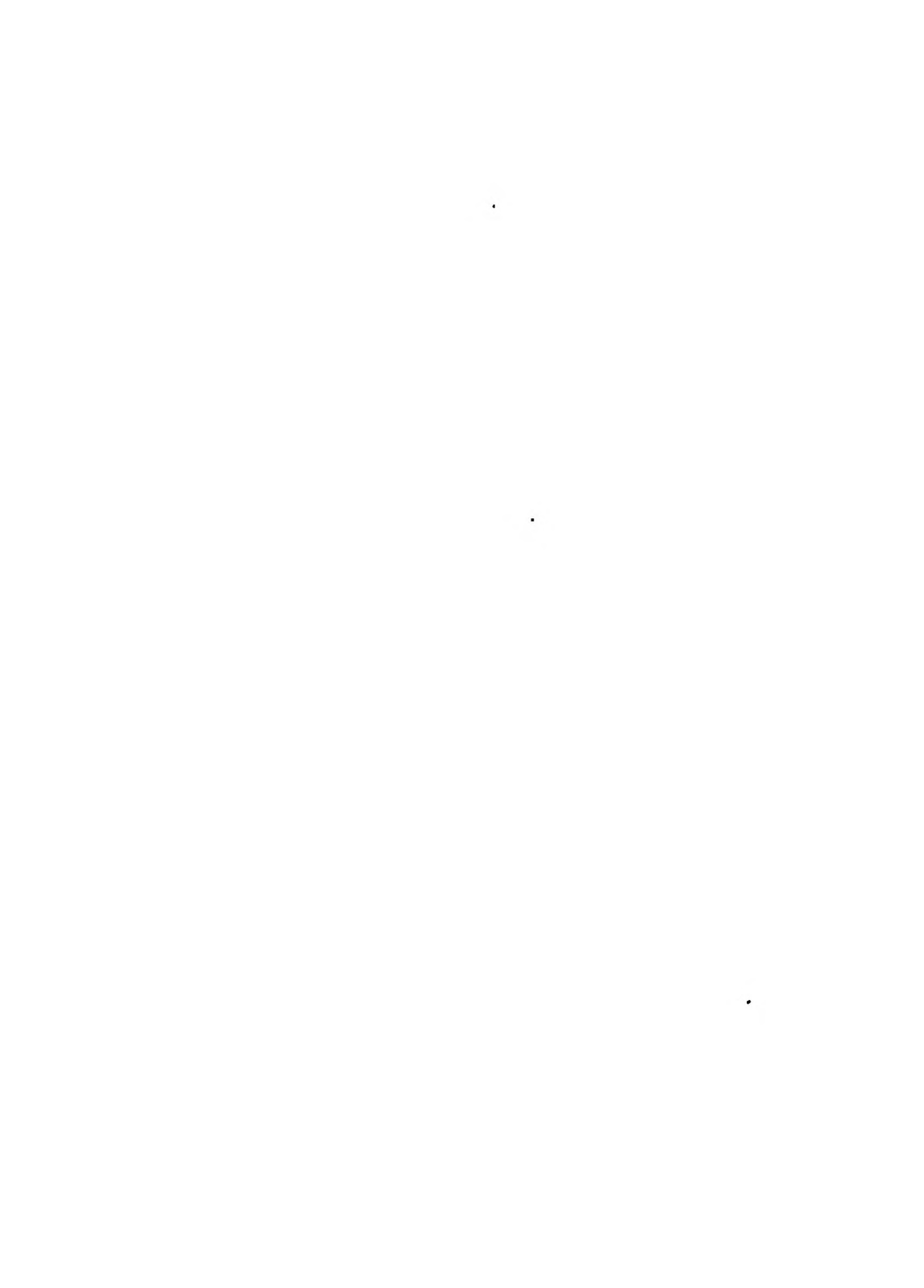
From the most ancient times the system of irrigation in Egypt had been that known as "basin" irrigation, by which the annual flood was poured upon the land in summer, in great areas or blocks known as basins, confined by banks and fed directly from the Nile by canals. When the flood came down in July or August these basins were filled and allowed to stand under water till October, when the water was again returned to the now falling Nile. But this system meant that throughout the early summer months the land lay absolutely parched and cracked with the heat, and literally barren except for the few lucky spots which could be irrigated by pumping machinery from the Nile or from deep wells. The result was that there were practically no summer crops at all, and the yield of the land was confined to the one crop that could be grown in autumn and winter after the arrival of the flood. Even this limited yield was, of course, of great value, and the system might have gone on for ever, for with the land lying fallow all summer, heavy winter crops could be taken off

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THE COLOSSI FROM THE RAMESSEUM IN  
THE EARLY MORNING





the land every year without need of any other rotations than this natural compulsory period of rest.

But the introduction of cotton under Mohammed Aly's vigorous hand made a change essential. Cotton is a summer crop, planted in March or April, and coming to harvest in August and September just when the approaching flood would drown it out. A new system was therefore introduced, known as "perennial" irrigation, under which, by digging deep canals all over the Delta, water could be carried from the Nile to the cotton lands all through the summer and winter, replacing the annual flooding of the basins at high Nile. This system was rapidly extended throughout the country, but it quickly raised another difficulty. Every year the heavy "red water" of the flood left a deposit of silt in the deep canals. This filled them up to a level far above that to which the Nile fell in spring and early summer, for owing to the scour of the river the Nile maintained its deep channel, into which the waters sank lower and lower as the river fell in summer. Thus it was absolutely necessary, if the canals were to take any water at all from the low Nile, that they should be cleaned out to their full depth every winter when the



flood was past, and this was a tremendous task. Mohammed Aly quickly realized this, and the French engineers who were advising him suggested an ingenious remedy—the erection of a great Barrage or regulating weir at the bifurcation of the Nile just below Cairo, where the mouths of the great irrigation canals take off from the Nile. By maintaining a fixed height of water there, regardless of the depth to which the Nile might sink elsewhere, it would be possible to fill the canals at a relatively high level, and so reduce the amount of annual clearance required. The scheme was approved, and work commenced in 1842, and Mohammed Aly laid the foundation-stone, as already described, in 1847; but serious defects appeared before it was finished, and after a despairing struggle to remedy them the whole scheme was abandoned in 1867.

The result was deplorable, for Ismail had no hesitation in applying the *corvée*, as he applied the *kourbash* (whip), without the slightest regard for the interests or the sufferings of his subjects. Thousands of men were drafted from all parts of the country every winter and spring, just at the time when work on their own lands was most required, to scrape with their hands, lacking other



## THE COLOSSI

THE two colossal sitting statues of Amenhotep III. were formerly in front of the pylon of a small temple now destroyed. Hewn out of hard grit stone 60 feet in height, they now stand alone in the great plain between Medinet-Habu and the Ramesseum, gazing out into the distance, their faces battered beyond recognition, watching the summer flood creep over the plain until they are surrounded by it, and gradually receding as winter approaches, when the enriched land will suddenly become a sheet of brilliant green young corn. Desolate and grey with the weariness of centuries of gazing, they will probably remain watching the corn ripen at their very feet for many centuries to come.

The statue on the north is the most celebrated, being known as the famous Colossus of Memnon, from which according to classical writers a strange sound was emitted every morning at dawn. Like many other Egyptian monuments it suffered considerably during the earthquake of A.C. 27, the head and shoulders being thrown down; though carefully restored by Septimus Severus the "vocal Memnon" became silent and never again made any sound.





tools, the muddy slime from the canal beds. The work was badly organized, and carried out with the most ruthless brutality, involving a yearly toll of lives lost, as wasteful and unnecessary as the economic loss it entailed on all concerned.

The removal of this great oppression was among the first reforms tackled, but not till after the British occupation could anything effective be done. The story of how the British irrigation engineers, brought from India, rebuilt or repaired the Barrage, and at last succeeded in making it do the work for which it had originally been designed, has been told in detail by one of those who did it.<sup>1</sup> Year by year not only was the burden of the *corvée* reduced, but the area benefited by the canal system was extended in a way which increased the wealth and taxable capacity of the country as fast as it reduced the burdens upon it.

Fast as the irrigation facilities grew, however, still faster grew the demands upon the increased water supply. New areas sprang into cultivation, and still the cry was always for more water. Every available drop in the Nile had now been utilized to the full, and the next step was to increase the actual amount available. This was

<sup>1</sup> Sir Hanbury Brown.

the object of the great Assuan Dam, which is entirely different in its purpose from the Cairo Barrage. The latter is merely a weir or regulator; the former is a storage reservoir, filled after high Nile and stored up till the following spring. As the Nile begins to fall to low-water mark the Barrage is closed, the Assuan Dam is opened, and the accumulated supply is sparingly doled out, to maintain the level in the Nile. The river then becomes from Assuan to the Barrage a long closed box or lock, from which the water is distributed by the canals over the whole cultivated area of the country. Thus was completed in 1902 the second stage of the irrigation system, an achievement of which British officials in Egypt had every reason to be proud. Supplementary barrages or weirs have now been erected at Assiut and Esneh, south of Cairo, and at Zifteh on the Damietta branch below the Cairo Barrage; at all these points main irrigation channels take off from the river.

One other silent but most potent factor in the regeneration of Egypt remains to be mentioned—the price of cotton. In 1894 Egyptian cotton fell below 7 dollars<sup>1</sup> per *kantar* (100 lbs.), and

<sup>1</sup> The Egyptian dollar=20 piastres. As  $97\frac{1}{2}$  piastres=£1 stg. the value of the dollar is practically the same as the American, a little over 4s.

that price was again reached in 1898. But from 1898 it went almost steadily up, till in 1907 it was above 24 dollars. Since then there have been violent fluctuations, but the average price has not been much below 20 dollars. The effects of such a change upon the whole agricultural and financial conditions of the country were simply marvellous. The land had always been fertile, but now to the original yield had been added a new summer crop, the value of which might be as much as £50 per acre per annum, for good land would yield even 10 *kantars* of cotton per acre.<sup>1</sup> The result was of course an immense increase in the value and rent of land, and this shewed itself immediately, not only in the increased wealth of cultivators and land-owners alike, but also in increased revenue to the Government. The revenue of Egypt is derived mainly from two sources, land tax and customs duties, both of which were directly affected by the increased value of the crops. The exports of cotton increased steadily both in quantity and value; and with them the improved purchasing power of the country shewed itself in greatly increased imports of all kinds of manufactured goods.

<sup>1</sup> There is also the value of the cotton seed to be taken into account, say £5 to £7 per acre.



In a few years the financial outlook became as rosy as it had formerly been black. Now completely solvent, the Government could dictate terms to the creditors, and in 1890-98 conversions of the various debts to lower rates of interest were easily carried through. Every access of prosperity brought further relief from the burdens and hindrances which had made the life of the Financial Adviser hard in early days, and finally, in 1904, it was felt that the position of the Government was now so secure that the old system of international control was no longer necessary. After the Anglo-French Agreement of that year, the functions of the Caisse de la Dette were reduced to those of merely formal trustees for debenture holders, and Egypt was left free to apply her increasing surpluses to the development of her resources, free of the tutelage which, once her salvation, had become in later years so annoying and unnecessary a hindrance to her progress.

Good luck and good guidance had combined to bring about a result which no one who knew Egypt in the old days could have believed possible. Fortunate in her later days as she had been unfortunate in the earlier, Modern Egypt has indeed cause to be grateful to those who held



## MEDINET-HABU

THE temple of Medinet-Habu, which is called after an early Christian town that once existed near by, lies a short distance to the south of the Ramesseum. The finest temple on the west bank of the Nile, which divides Thebes, it contains three distinct monuments—the small temple built in the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thotmes III.; the pavilion of Rameses III., used possibly by the king and his suite as a temporary residence during festivals; and finally, the great temple of Rameses III. The latter is well preserved and truly magnificent, having been built during the king's lifetime as a funerary chapel to his own memory and glorification. Two colonnaded courts are each approached by their separate pylons, and then comes the hypostyle hall leading to various sanctuaries and small rooms. The colouring of the ceilings of the pylons is especially good, and the reliefs, representing naval and military scenes, are very well preserved.



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steadily on their way through all opposition and difficulties. If the accumulation of the debt by Ismail was unique, no less so was the way in which, in less than thirty years, the country was dragged back from a state of bankruptcy to such a pitch of prosperity that even ninety millions of debt seems almost an unconsidered trifle.

Lord Cromer's *Annual Reports on Egypt*. British Parliamentary Blue-books.

*History of the Delta Barrage*, by Major (now Sir) Hanbury Brown.

See also *Report on Cotton-Growing in Egypt and the Sudan*, published by the International Cotton Federation, 1913, for the recent history of irrigation and the cotton crop.



# EGYPT OF TO-DAY





## CHAPTER XI

### EGYPT OF TO-DAY

#### THE FELLAH

As there have been many Egypts in the past, all widely different from each other, yet all strung on a chain of underlying unity throughout these differences, so in the Egypt of to-day there are many different Egypts, each a little world of itself, differing in manners and customs, in point of view, and in social and economic conditions from the others, yet all founded upon a solid basis of common interest in the one source of the wealth of the country—agriculture.

There is the Egypt of the desert and the Bedouin Arabs with their sheep, goats, and camels, as against the Egypt of the cultivated land and the fellaheen. There is the Egypt of the country and the agricultural population on the one hand, blue-gowned peasants, illiterate, simple in ideas

and in wants, frugal, industrious, and happy, and the Egypt of the towns on the other, the home of the effendis, beys, and pashas, those who wear the semi-Turkish *tarbush* (fez) with European trousers and other cheap Austrian ready-mades, and whose manners, habits, and vices are as mixed as their clothes.

In the two great cities and other large towns there is the Egypt of the European quarters, the boulevards and the cafés, and there is the Egypt of the native quarters, narrow streets, small booths, and native industries. There is the Egypt of public life in the streets, and in the *selamlık*, the men's quarters or public reception-rooms of the house, and, on the other side, the Egypt of the *harém*,<sup>1</sup> as utterly unknown to the outsider, and especially to the European, as the sacred cities of the Hedjaz to unbelievers. There is the Egypt of the great Moslem majority, and the Egypt of the Copts, a poor minority numerically, yet of such permeating power and influence that their importance is out of all proportion to their numbers.

So with the people who make up these little worlds. There is no such thing as an Egyptian.

<sup>1</sup> *Anglice* harem, women's quarters.

The people of Egypt, or rather the population of Egypt, consists of every race of Northern Africa, Western Asia, and all but the extreme north of Europe ; but the backbone of them all is the fellah or agricultural labourer. He represents to this day the essential stock of the original Egyptian race, dating back long before they were ever called "Aegypti" by the Greeks, and, on the whole, remarkably little changed in facial or mental characteristics from their earliest ancestors who have been preserved for us in the frescoes upon the tomb walls. So too throughout all the ages agriculture has been the backbone, indeed almost the sole source, of Egypt's wealth and the ruling consideration in her government. Through all the ages that she has been ruled by foreign races Egypt has remained an agricultural country with a population of small-holders. Her happy days were under those rulers who looked after the irrigation works and left the peasants in peace to cultivate the soil, the ruler taking only a reasonable share, which the humble cultivators willingly gave. Her evil days have been those when she was ruled by ignorant autocrats, who neglected the source of the country's wealth, allowed the irrigation works to fall into decay, and oppressed

her population by unproductive public works, or the drain of great wars.

By that standard let the Egypt of to-day be judged, under her latest rulers. The fellah asks little of his superiors. Give him water and leave him a share of the produce of his land and labour, and he cares little who rules him for the time. In these respects he has certainly no ground of complaint in these latter days. The water-supply is better than it has ever been before, though the enormous increase of the demand upon it, for the irrigation of lands newly brought under cultivation, makes it still a struggle in years of bad flood, such as 1912, to pull through the baking heat of the summer. But the fellah knows now, as he certainly never knew before, that the distribution is as nearly impartial as it is possible to make it, with an administration in which Oriental methods and men must necessarily be employed in the actual execution of the work.

The burden of taxation has been lightened, not only by direct remission or reduction of taxes, but also by the unparalleled increase in the fertility of his land and the value of his crops. Now he knows exactly what he will be called upon to pay, and when ; it is collected at the time when he can



## EDFU

THE temple of Edfu is without doubt the grandest of all the Egyptian temples of the Ptolemaic period. Only some 40 years ago it was almost completely hidden from view by the accumulated masses of rubbish which filled the courtyards, and on its very roof stood mud houses. M. Mariette cleared it out, but at a much more recent date M. Bersanti carried out some necessary repairs to the roof and the west side of the temple, so that now the temple stands intact, down to the grooves for the banners on the gigantic pylon which towers above the plain and can be seen for miles round. The building of the temple occupied 180 years, having been begun in the reign of Ptolemy III., B.C. 237, and finished in B.C. 57. The first great court is surrounded on three sides by a gallery supported on columns and leads to the two dark covered halls each with their massive columns, and eventually the sanctuary is reached where doubtless stood the statue of Horus to whom the temple was dedicated. The walls of the passage round the temple are adorned with admirable reliefs and are in perfect condition.







most conveniently pay it, and under conditions which have made evasion no longer possible or indeed necessary. There is no *kourbash* now, and though the money-lender still exists, it is only as a recognized evil, which the Government is doing its best to combat, instead of, as in the old days, to encourage.

Under such conditions the fellah simply must prosper, for he is probably the most patient and industrious labourer in any semi-tropical country in the world, lacking perhaps the ingenuity and resource which have made the Chinaman the model of intensive cultivation to the world, yet equalling him in patience, in the simplicity of his wants, and, above all things, in his inborn love of the little bit of land which he can call his own. Egypt is *par excellence* the land of small-holdings. In 1911, 90 per cent of all the proprietors of land in Egypt held less than five acres. There are over three-quarters of a million who hold less than one acre, and the average of these small-holdings is less than half an acre. Let it not be thought that this means poverty, for so fruitful is the soil, yielding three or four crops per annum, all of which are now at high prices, that one acre of good land is enough to maintain the fellah and his wife, or even

wives, and household in comfort. Even if he cannot aspire to such independence, the fellah will still hold to his little plot of quarter of an acre or less, cultivate it carefully at every spare moment, and eke out the necessary margin of income by hiring himself to more fortunate owners, whose land is greater than they can themselves cultivate at times of pressure. So much is this the case that it is almost impossible to draw the line between the different classes of agricultural status. The farm labourer may be paid for his services partly by the allowance of a small plot for his own use, either rent free or at a reduced rent. The rent may be a share of the crops, thus bringing him practically into the same category as the "metayer" holder, who takes his land from the owner on condition of sharing the crops in certain proportions with him. Even here, the landlord's contribution to the joint adventure is not confined to the mere letting of the land, for the necessary *gamoose* (native buffalo) which supplies power for the water-lifting machine (*sakia*) and for his rude plough, and milk and butter for his family, or for sale, may be the property of the landlord, who draws payment partly in kind for its use. The variety of these arrangements is endless and most

interesting. Relatively little of the land is held for purely monetary considerations as under the English rent system, and long leases are unknown.

The chief crops are: in summer, cotton, maize (*durra*), and sugar, especially in Upper Egypt; in winter, wheat, barley, and *berseem* (clover); while all kinds of others are sandwiched in between, so as to get the absolute maximum of produce from the soil. The fellah's methods of cultivation are simple in the extreme, yet wonderfully efficient. Of capital he requires almost none. His house is of mud, built by his own hands on the plot of ground in the *exbeh* (village or farm-steading) set apart for the purpose rent free. It consists of four walls and an open roof of wooden beams, covered with cotton or maize stalks, which are stored there for use as fuel in winter, and every kind of rubbish. Only in the Northern Delta, where rain is relatively frequent, are there found the domed huts, which look like old-fashioned beehives in clay. He requires no buildings for shelter of cattle or storage of crops. His winter cereals are threshed on the ground in the open air by the old-fashioned *norag*, a heavy wooden framework on a series of sharp-edged wheels, dragged round and round by "the ox which

treadeth out the corn"; at the same time, this cuts up the straw into *tibn*, the only fodder available, after the *berseem* is finished, to carry his poor cattle through the summer. The *tibn* boats, laden half-mast high and sunk to the gunwale, are a strange sight on the Nile in spring. Winnowing is equally simple; it is done by throwing the cut mass up into the air with a wooden shovel; the *tibn* is blown to one side, and the heavier grain falls to the ground. His *berseem* and cotton are sold as they are harvested; while the summer *durra* crop is his year's food-supply. His implements are of the most rudimentary form, a *fass* or short-handled hoe, the oldest agricultural implement in the world, a rough wooden plough, and other equally cheap contrivances, with which the ground is levelled, so that the irrigation water may flow evenly over the land.

His household equipment is just as primitive; for furniture he requires nothing but a low mud-built oven for baking bread, which also serves as a divan by day and a bed by night. His food is largely vegetarian, with a little oil or butter and milk. His clothing is the characteristic blue *galabieh*, a long gown which he tucks up round his waist when at work, and a few cheap cotton



## KOM OMBO

THE ruins of the temple of Kom Ombo stand on a broad terrace on the east bank of the Nile, and when the temple was complete it must have been one of the most beautiful of all the Egyptian temples. Its situation was unique, as no other temple seems to have commanded such a glorious view. The pylon has almost entirely disappeared, also the Mammisi or small temple, which stood on the left of the platform in front of the temple, so the view of the Great Temple is almost unbroken from the river.







undergarments, kept clean by frequent washing. With an income of a shilling a day (5 piastres) he is well off, and can save money, which he buries in a hole in the ground or the wall of his hut.

His pleasures and holidays are mostly connected with religious feasts, for Islam is a complete social and judicial system, which provides him with all the guidance and government he requires in every occasion or emergency of life.

It must be remembered that these feasts follow the Mohammedan calendar, which consists of twelve lunar months of twenty-nine or thirty days each, so that they occur about eleven days earlier in every solar year. There is the first *Bairam*, following the great fast of *Ramadan*, during which the pious Moslem neither eats, drinks, nor smokes, from an hour before sunrise till sunset. When the changing year brings this fast round to the summer months, it is a very severe test of Moslem piety, and the sight of old men in the streets, waiting patiently, cigarette in hand, for the sunset gun, is really pathetic. Then follows feasting, which turns night into day, and leaves them fit for almost nothing but sleep during the day. The close of Ramadan is marked by four days of public holiday, during which visits

are paid to the family tombs, and they are decorated with palm branches. Every one wears new clothes, and the days and nights are filled with feasting and games. Quaint "merry-go-rounds," which revolve vertically instead of horizontally, are set up in every small town, and are greatly patronized by the children. The great *Aïd* or *Kourban Bairam*, the Feast of Sacrifice, follows about two months after the first Bairam, and is celebrated in a similar way. The *Mouled-el-Nebi* or Prophet's Birthday is another holiday, to which are added local feasts to the patron saints of different localities, such as the *Mouled* of Sidi Ahmed-el-Bedawi at the great mosque of Tanta, described in Pickthall's *Children of the Nile*. *Shem-el-Nessim*, corresponding roughly to the European May Day—it means the smelling of the zephyrs—comes at a fixed period of the solar year in early summer. It is supposed to mark the beginning of the *Khamseen* or fifty days, during which the terrible hot winds, sand-laden from the southern deserts, are liable to sweep over the country, much to the discomfort of the few belated tourists who are still in Egypt at that season.

The rising of the Nile flood is also celebrated by great occasions of feasting, the first about the

middle of June, known as the *Leylet-el-Nuktah* or Night of the Drop, on which a miraculous drop is supposed to fall into the Nile, which causes it to rise. In Cairo this is followed by the great celebration of the Cutting of the Khalig, the old canal which used to carry the water from the Nile to the city and beyond, and the opening of which marked the arrival of the flood. Though the Khalig has now been closed for sanitary reasons, and its site converted into a tramway route, the celebration of the *Foum-el-Khalig* is still maintained as a symbol of the critical period of the rising of the river.

But the great event of the Mohammedan year is the Pilgrimage to Mecca, which in Cairo gives rise to two great occasions of feasting—the departure and the return of the *Mahmal*. As a great deal of misunderstanding has arisen about the exact meaning of this Mahmal, the following account, based on Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, may be given.

The Mahmal itself is merely an accidental appendage of the pilgrimage. In the thirteenth century the great Queen, Sheger-el-Durr (Spray of Pearls), having resolved to join the pilgrimage to the holy places, had made for her journey in

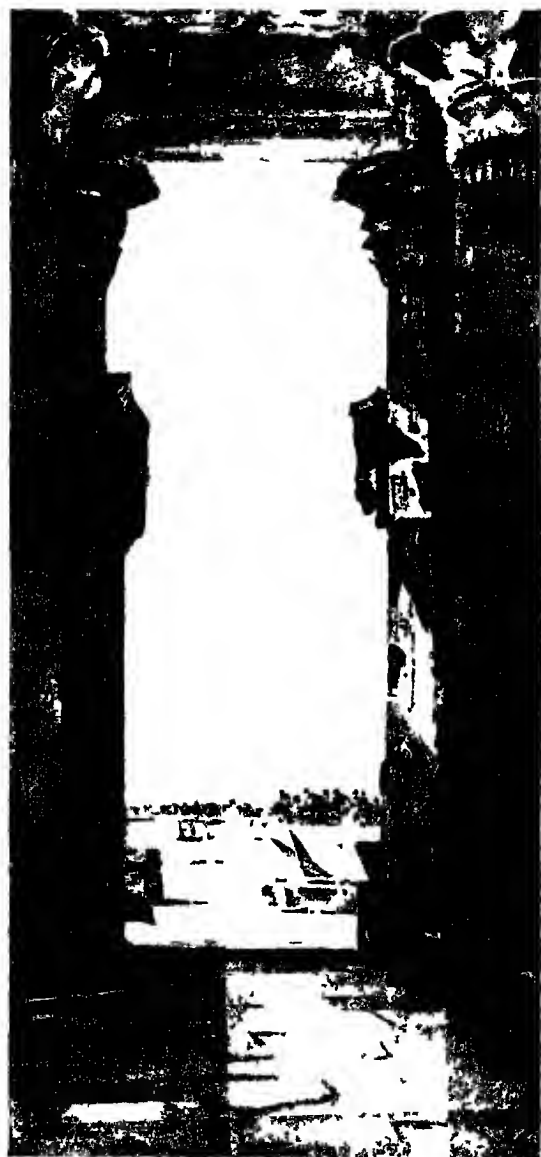
proper state an elaborate howdah, or small tent, to be carried on camel back. In subsequent years this howdah, which was called the Mahmal, was still sent on the pilgrimage, though without its royal occupant, till gradually the thing became a habit, and was regarded as a necessary symbol of royalty in the procession.

The popular idea now among tourists is that it contains the holy carpet which is sent every year from Egypt, with another from Constantinople, to Mecca. This, by the way, is not a carpet, but an elaborately decorated covering for the *Kaaba* at Mecca; and, as a matter of fact, the Egyptian *Kisweh* goes not to Mecca at all—that honour belongs to the Sultan's own covering from Constantinople—but to another of the holy places, at Medina. This holy carpet, then, is still made every year at the expense of the government in Cairo; it is rather comical to read in the *Journal Officiel* the advertisement, quite in modern style, of the contract for the supply of materials for its construction. Needless to say, however, it does not travel in the Mahmal, which would not hold one of its sections; as a matter of fact, it now makes the greater part of its journey prosaically by rail. The departure of the *Kisweh* and the Mahmal,



## THE GREAT TEMPLE, KOM OMBO

THE Great Temple, with its large courtyard and colonnades, was dedicated to Sebek the god of the crocodiles, and was called by the ancient Egyptians Der-Sebek. The temple belongs to the period of the Ptolemies, and additions were made during the Roman period, especially the Chapel of Hathor, which appears never to have been completed. The ornate capitals of the columns, which are in an excellent state of preservation, and the reliefs on the walls, which are full of life and grace, speak for themselves of the date of the building, and are a great contrast to the severe and austere style which prevailed at an earlier period.







however, and the return of the latter with the old carpet a few months later, still provide occasions of great rejoicing every year, and not infrequently of disturbance. At times of political unrest, such as the Turco-Italian War, when religious feeling was running high, special precautions had to be taken to prevent outbreaks of fanaticism.

It may be mentioned in passing that in addition to all these Mohammedan occasions of holiday-making, Egypt rejoices in the possession of other two complete sets of holidays. Of the various Christian sects in the country, some follow the modern Gregorian calendar, like the English, while others, like the Orthodox Greek Church, adhere to the old Julian calendar—the “old style” which was still kept in some parts of Scotland less than a generation ago. The result is that there are three different New Year’s Days in Egypt, the English or new style, and the Greek and Coptic or old style, these two being about thirteen days apart, and the Mohammedan, which circles round the other two. The same applies to Easter, though once, in 1906, it so happened that the two Easters and Shem-el-Nessim fell upon the same day.

The same trouble arises with regard to Sunday.

Friday, in Arabic, *Yom el Goma'*, or the day of Assembly, is, of course, the Mohammedan Sunday, and Saturday the Jewish Sabbath; the original meaning of the latter is also preserved in the Arabic name of *Yom el Sabt*, the seventh day. The English Sunday is absolutely ignored by official arrangements, but the Copts are allowed that day off, with the result that on Friday the Ministries are officially closed, while on Sundays they are half deserted for all the Copts are away, and the English officials have a quiet day devoted to clearing up arrears for the week. The Government schools are open on Sundays, but usually only for half the day.

These things, however, matter little to the fellah, who ignores all but his own religious occasions. He has also many other occasions of private festivities. A big crop or a good price for his cotton means the possibility of another wife for himself, or one for his son, and the ceremony is an occasion of feasting and fun to which all and sundry are invited. Such a feast in the house of a well-to-do pasha is indeed a great occasion. The male guests are entertained in the *selamlık* to a feast of literally gargantuan proportions. The writer has frequently lost count after over twenty

courses had been disposed of and still more to come. But the explanation is simple; the provision is intended not merely for the visible guests but for the whole household. When the lords of creation have finished, the dishes will pass to the *harém* where the ladies of the house are entertaining their friends. When they are satisfied, the remains will pass below stairs to provide a feast among the servants, who in a native house are innumerable, and all their friends and relations. Nothing is likely to be wasted in the long run.

But apart from such festive occasions the fellah's needs are simple. His family is large and costs little, and the natural increase of the population is only kept down by the excessive death-rate, for infantile mortality especially is terribly high. Sanitation is, of course, non-existent, and the Moslem's notions of cleanliness, which are not merely next to godliness but literally are a part of his religious duties, do not extend to young children or others who have not yet "got religion." Those who have seen native children in Egypt will not be surprised to learn that to wash them is regarded as dangerous and unlucky. Ophthalmia is certainly less common than it was, but enteric fever and many other dangerous troubles are so prevalent

that practically all those who survive the years of childhood are immune.

His relations with the Government are, on the whole, friendly nowadays, and indeed almost patriarchal. His land tax is moderate, impartially and equitably assessed, and collected in the least inconvenient way, by instalments at the seasons of his harvests, spring and autumn. His greatest weakness is lack of foresight and incapability of realizing future needs. He sells his crop and spends the price, without providing for next year's seed, with the result that he usually has to borrow enough to carry him through next season. The village money-lender and the travelling merchant, who is the universal provider of Egypt, are his worst enemies; but from them every effort is now being made to save him, under Lord Kitchener's energetic and paternal care for his interests.

It must be remembered that Egypt is the land of middlemen. The simplest transaction cannot be carried through without the *wakeel* or intermediary. The large land-owner does not deal with his own tenants direct; he lets a large area to one person, who sublets it in small-holdings to the actual tenants—at an increased rent, of course. The bulk of the cotton crop passes through the



MOUNTAINS TO THE NORTH OF ASSUAN  
FROM A GARDEN ON ELEPHANTINE  
ISLAND

THE little town of Assuan appears now to be almost entirely modern, but it dates from ancient days. It was known as Syene, and was of some importance as it commanded the access to the first cataract. Elephantine Island is said to be so named, as it was here that the Egyptians first saw African elephants. Originally the whole district was called Yebou, *i.e.* the land of elephants.








hands of many middlemen, who all make their profit, and generally a little over, out of the fellah. His ignorance of many things naturally makes him an easy prey, but thanks to his natural shrewdness and ingrained suspicion, the advantage is not always on the one side. To rescue him from the exploitation of unscrupulous middlemen, the Government has recently embarked upon a rather arduous course of legislation. Government seed distribution schemes are struggling to find good seed for him, and to persuade him to use it. Government instruction by example and precept is offered to him at every turn. In dealing with the insect pests, which in years of neglect did so much harm to the staple crop, the Government is not content with mere instruction, but has taken steps to enforce attention to preventive measures. The fellah's instinctive attitude to all such measures is passive resistance. If Allah sends the cotton-worm, why should we attempt to get rid of it? That Allah did send it, in the fog which came down over the fields during the night, is beyond proof. Was not the fog there this morning—and the cotton-worm? Had any one seen a cotton-worm till this morning? No. Then what more proof is needed. To suggest that the cotton-worm was there all the time, and

only appeared in great numbers when the fog brought suitable conditions of moisture and coolness, is simply impious. Left to themselves, therefore, for a year, the cotton-worm prevention system was utterly neglected; the worm flourished apace, and the crop was seriously damaged in 1908. So the English inspectors had to be re-appointed, and rigorous measures taken to enforce the necessary work of destruction of the caterpillar and eggs. But it is doubtful whether any amount of experience of the efficacy and necessity of these methods will ever make any difference to the average fellah. An English cotton-worm inspector once had this very forcibly put to him by an old sheikh, with whom he fell into conversation one evening by the canal. "Well, how is the cotton-worm now?" "Finished. There is none. How can there be cotton-worm now? It is more than our life is worth. You English give us no peace. Every official in the place, from the policeman up to the Mudir (head of a county), is after us, and on the top of all, you English inspectors yourselves. If we do not pick the cotton-worm they beat us with staves—you fine us, you send us to prison, you take us as prisoners to another man's fields and make us pick *his* cotton-worm. What can we do? And




so there is no cotton-worm." "And hasn't it saved your cotton this year?" "Assuredly, the praise to Allah." "Then won't you do all this picking next year without us coming to make you do it?" "No." "Why?" "Because that is the way Allah made us?"

When his cotton is at last picked, he can take it to the Government *halaqa* or local market, where reliable scales are provided and the latest Alexandria prices are exhibited for his guidance. But will he do so? Not if the private merchant outside the gates has an opportunity to fill him up with lies about the evil intentions and methods of the Government concealed behind this specious offer of assistance. It is said that nothing contributed more to the success of these intrigues against the Government markets than the fact that there was a branch of the Government Savings Banks inside, where the fellah might lodge part of the price he had received till he required it again in the spring. After all, to a fellah who does not know the difference between a bank-note and a jam label, for he can neither read nor understand a picture, it is rather a severe trial of faith to be asked to believe that a few scribbles in a book are as good as his hard-earned

money. Yet if Lord Kitchener says it, he will learn to believe it in course of time.

But Lord Kitchener's crowning mercy is the Five Feddan Law, under which no owner of less than five *feddans* (acres) can be sold up under mortgage. It was, of course, an excellent idea to curb the fellah's borrowing proclivities by withdrawing the facilities for it which have demoralized him in the past, but the first shock of the withdrawal is rather severe, and no one quite knows yet how it will work out in the long run.

What marks the absolute contrast between these new ideas and the days of old is the fact that it is the interests of the fellaheen above all others that are being considered; and if the prosperity of a country is to be measured by the contentment of its lower classes, then Egypt is indeed to be envied now. Real poverty, in the sense of want amounting to starvation, is unknown. There is no poor law, for the poor are adequately provided for by private benevolence and ever ready charity. Absolute illiteracy is, of course, the rule. At the last census only  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the native *male* population could read or write; the rate among the women would, of course, be still worse. Ignorance, suspicion, and





## THE BAZAAR, ASSUAN

A SMALL native bazaar has sprung up in comparatively recent years in Assuan, where carpets, shawls, baskets, jewellery, Egyptian antiquities (fresh from the factory), Indian and Persian goods are all hung out to tempt the unwary traveller. The small mosque near the entrance and the subdued light of the covered-in little narrow street make the bazaar a very picturesque feature of the little modern town of Assuan.







superstition are rife; change or improvement is impossibly slow. Crimes of vengeance such as crop-burning and even murder are fairly common, but real wickedness is rare. Drink, of course, is never touched by a decent Moslem, and though the use of *hashish*<sup>1</sup> is common, such excess as to do serious or permanent harm is relatively rare.

Labour troubles and industrial unrest are unknown outside of the large towns. The fellah has no grievances, unless where he does not own his land, for rents have been pushed to an abnormal figure. As much as £20 per acre per annum has been paid for good cotton land in recent years; and these rents, which were only justified by the famine prices of cotton a few years ago, are slow to fall again to a level more in proportion to the lower prices. But it never occurs, either to the landlord or tenant, that the remedy is to lower the rents. It seems to them so much easier and more natural to revert to the famine prices. After all, it is the same idea that ruled our own politics just a hundred years ago.

That just sums up the situation of the Egyptian fellah; he is about one hundred years behind the

<sup>1</sup> An intoxicant, analogous to opium, made from hemp. It is the root of the English word assassin (*hashasheen*).

times. The Industrial Revolution has not touched him, in spite of Mohammed Aly's determination to make Egypt an industrial country, and Ismail's boast that it was now part of Europe. One feels inclined to thank Allah for it. It is good for us in this industrial age to be able to turn for contrast to a country where the old agricultural system still goes on, untouched by modern "improvements," and free from all the evils we have learned to recognize as part of our industrial system. Truly in some ways "poverty with contentment is great gain."

*Egypt.* Painted and described by Talbot Kelly, 1906. (A. & C. Black.)

*Things seen in Egypt*, by Mrs. Butcher, 1912. (Seeley, Service & Co.)

*The People of Egypt*, by Lance Thackeray, 1911. (A. & C. Black.)

*The Children of the Nile*, by Marmaduke Pickthall, 1908. (John Murray.)

# THE CITY OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



## CHAPTER XII

### THE CITY OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

He who hath not seen Cairo hath not seen the world.  
Its soil is gold, its Nile is a wonder,  
Its women are like the black-eyed Virgins of Paradise,  
Its houses are palaces, and its air is temperate,  
Its odour surpassing that of aloes-wood, and cheering the heart.  
And how can Cairo be otherwise, when it is the metropolis of  
the world?

“The Story told by the Jewish Physician”  
in *The Arabian Nights*.

If confusion amidst a mass of detail be the fate of the traveller who attempts to master the many histories of Egypt, no less likely is it to be his feeling when he first visits the native quarters of Cairo. An apparently endless, planless maze of crooked narrow streets, leading in every direction, but to no apparent centre, filled with a crowd of indescribable variety, thronged by every kind of means of transport, from donkeys and camels carrying huge bundles to tourist-laden *arabeahs*, forcing their way through lanes which seem

too narrow for anything but foot traffic, and too ill-paved even for that, a maze that makes your head ache, and leaves upon your mind only a vague impression of pandemonium let loose—such is one's first impression of the Musky or native quarters of Cairo. Yet it is a pity that it should be so, for it is quite capable of being understood, and well worth the trouble; but there is only one way to do it. You must get outside of it to be able to get some idea of its geography, for, as we have endeavoured to shew in previous chapters, its geography is bound up with its history, and its history is itself. Now there is only one direction in which you can get outside of it for such a purpose, and that is upwards. You cannot see a rolling wooded country while in the woods; you must climb a tree and look over it. So you cannot hope to understand this maze of a town, full of lowly booths and lofty spires, except by getting to the top of one of these same spires, and obtaining a bird's-eye view which will make a map intelligible. Let us try to shew you it from this point of vantage.

First of all, remember that the Fatimide city of el-Kahira, as enclosed by Bedr's wall about 1090, was roughly four square with two main cross streets

at right angles, cutting it into square blocks. Saladdin's city of 1170 followed a somewhat similar plan, but enclosed a much wider area, which the city gradually filled up. But Mohammed Aly, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, utterly disregarding the original plan, drove a great main thoroughfare diagonally across it, from the tramway centre at Ataba-el-Khadra to the Citadel.

Beginning from the same starting-point, we go down the Sharia-el-Musky, which was once the European quarter of the city, till we cross the Khalig, now a tramway route, but formerly the fresh-water canal which brought water from the Nile at Roda to the city. Beyond the Khalig we pass into the original city of el-Kahira. The Sharia-el-Musky continues due eastwards through it, the only street in the city that could even be called straight, and out at the Eastern wall, just below Windmill Hill, to the Eastern Cemetery or so-called Tombs of the Khalifs. At right angles to this main street, crossing it about half-way down, where it changes its name to "Sikket-el-Gedideh" or New Road, runs another not quite so straight, but easily followed, which forms the main north and south artery of the city, and goes from the Bab-el-Zuweyla on the south to the Bab-el-Futtuh



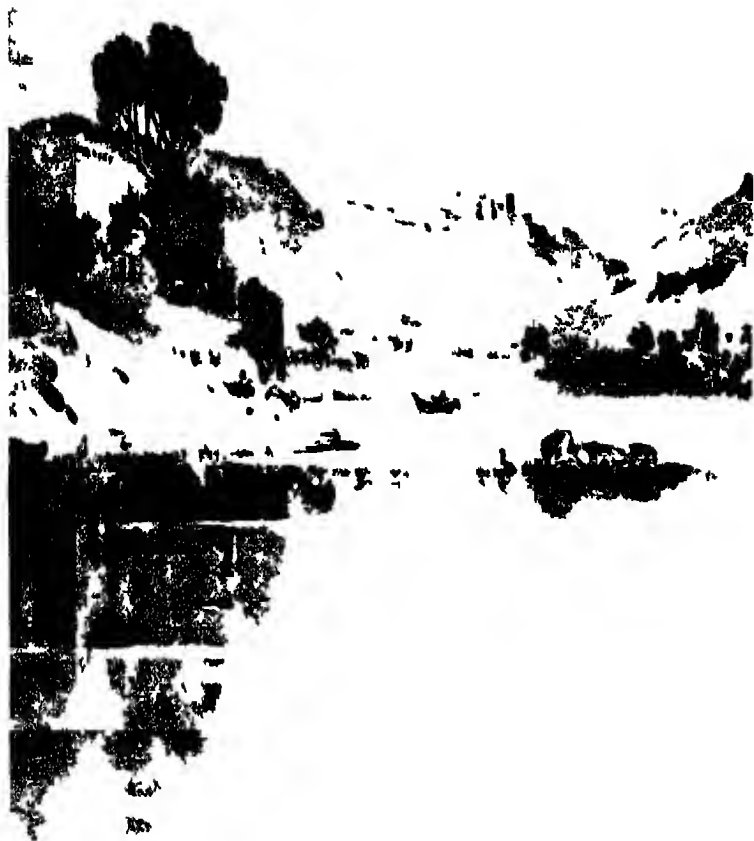
and Bab-el-Nasr on the north. At all these three exits remains of the ancient walls are still standing, much of them in perfect preservation. These three sides, then, with the line of the Khalig on the west, may be taken as bounding the city of el-Kahira in the eleventh century, but Saladdin in the twelfth extended his walls a long way to the south, so as to include the greater part of the ruins of Ibn-Tulun's city of el-Katai, and also of its predecessors el-Askar and Fostat, and, of course, the new Citadel itself on the south-east. The result is that while the mosque of el Hákim at the Bab-el-Futtuh is almost clear of the city to the north, that of el-Moayyad, whose twin minarets now crown the Bab-el-Zuweyla, is right in the middle of the city, which stretches away on the south to the mosque of Ibn-Tulun, and almost without a break to Old Cairo, the site of Fostat and the old Roman fort of Babylon. These two mosques of el Hákim and Ibn-Tulun, with their tall minarets, are the best points from which to gain some idea of the plan of the city, and its different quarters.

The mosque of Ibn-Tulun is well worth visiting for its own sake, for, both architecturally and historically, it is of the greatest importance. Built in 876-878, it is certainly the oldest building



## THE MONASTERY OF ST. SIMON, ASSUAN

ON the west bank of the Nile, opposite the Island of Elephantine, at the top of a steep hill overlooking a small valley with long stretches of golden sand, lie the ruins of the Coptic monastery of St. Simon or Simeon. The building was originally surrounded *by a wall and shows signs of having been more or less fortified*. The monks lived in the northern tower. On the ramparts were hiding-places for watchmen, and within the enclosure was a large church and several chapels. The remains of the Coptic writings on the walls show that a visit to the monastery was regarded as a meritorious act, and to this day Coptic women visit the ruins and make offerings if their prayers are granted.



1944



of the Arab period in Egypt, and therefore the oldest building in Cairo except the Roman fort at Babylon. The following description is excerpted from Lane Poole's *Cairo* (Mediaeval Towns Series), p. 77 *et seq* :

The monument which has immortalized Ibn-Tulun, however, is his mosque, the only building of all his sumptuous little city that has survived the buffets of civil war and the slow detrition of neglect. It is the most interesting monument of Mohammedan Egypt, and forms a landmark in the history of architecture. Two features specially distinguish it: it was built entirely of new materials, instead of the spoils of old churches and temples, and it is the earliest instance of the use of the pointed arch throughout a building, earlier by at least two centuries than any in England.

Ibn-Tulun was at first in a difficulty how to procure the three hundred columns needed to support the arcades, but his architect, who was a Christian and doubtless a Copt, and was at the time in prison for some offence, wrote to him that he would undertake to build him a mosque of the size he required without columns.

The adoption of the new plan of brick piers, instead of columns, led to the employment of the pointed arch, and the exclusion of marble suggested the plaster or stucco decoration which still preserves its original admirable designs.

The general form of the mosque is similar to that of 'Amr as restored, the form of every mosque in Cairo from the ninth to the thirteenth century. The great square court, covering three acres of ground, gave room for the largest

assembly, whilst the covered arcades offered shelter from the sun to the ordinary congregation and to the groups of students, ascetics, and beggars who have always made their homes in mosques. The south-east arcade or *liwan*, with its deeper aisles, was the special sanctuary, where the *mihrab* or niche in the wall showed the direction (*kibla*) of Mekka, towards which the prayers of the faithful must turn, and the pulpit (*minbar*) and platform (*dikka*) gave the preacher and the precentors vantage to make their voices heard throughout the crowd of worshippers.

The dome and minaret, so characteristic of later Cairo mosques, are here wanting. The odd-looking corkscrew tower, with external winding staircase, is hardly a minaret in the common sense of the term. There is no dome, because the dome has nothing to do with prayer, and therefore nothing with a mosque. "It is simply the roof of a tomb, and only exists where there is a tomb to be covered, or at least where it was intended that a tomb should be. Only where there is a chapel attached to a mosque, containing the tomb of the founder or his family, is there a dome, and it is no more closely connected with the mosque itself than is the grave it covers: neither is necessary to a place of prayer. It happens, however, that a large number of the mosques of Cairo are mausoleums, containing a chamber with the tomb of the founder, and the profusion of domes to be seen, when one looks down upon the city from the battlements of the Citadel, has brought about the not unnatural mistake of thinking that every mosque must have a dome. Most mosques with tombs have domes, but no mosque that was not intended to contain a tomb ever had one in the true sense."

Tradition has been busy with the site of the mosque. It is said to have been the witness of

three great events, the landing of the Ark, the trial of Abraham in the sacrifice of Isaac (according to the Arab version it was Ishmael), and the appearance of the burning bush to Moses. As to the peculiar shape of the tower a good tale is told. Ahmed Ibn-Tulun was one day holding a *Diwan* or Council at which the elders and notables were discussing affairs of state. His attention wandering, he sat twiddling a piece of paper between his fingers, shaping it into a whorl. Suddenly he awoke to the fact that his councillors had been propounding a question for his decision and were waiting for his answer, and—he did not know what the question was. At his wits' end to avoid confession of such discourtesy, he continued in silence to twiddle the whorl of paper. Suddenly he spoke: "Call my architect," for the plans of his new mosque were under consideration. The Copt appeared, in fear and trembling no doubt. "You see this paper. Make me a tower for my mosque like that." The situation was saved, and the shape of the tower, with its corkscrew outside stair, is there to this day to confirm the story.

As we ascend the tower an extraordinary panorama is spread out all round us, flat roofs everywhere, broken by numberless minarets and domes,



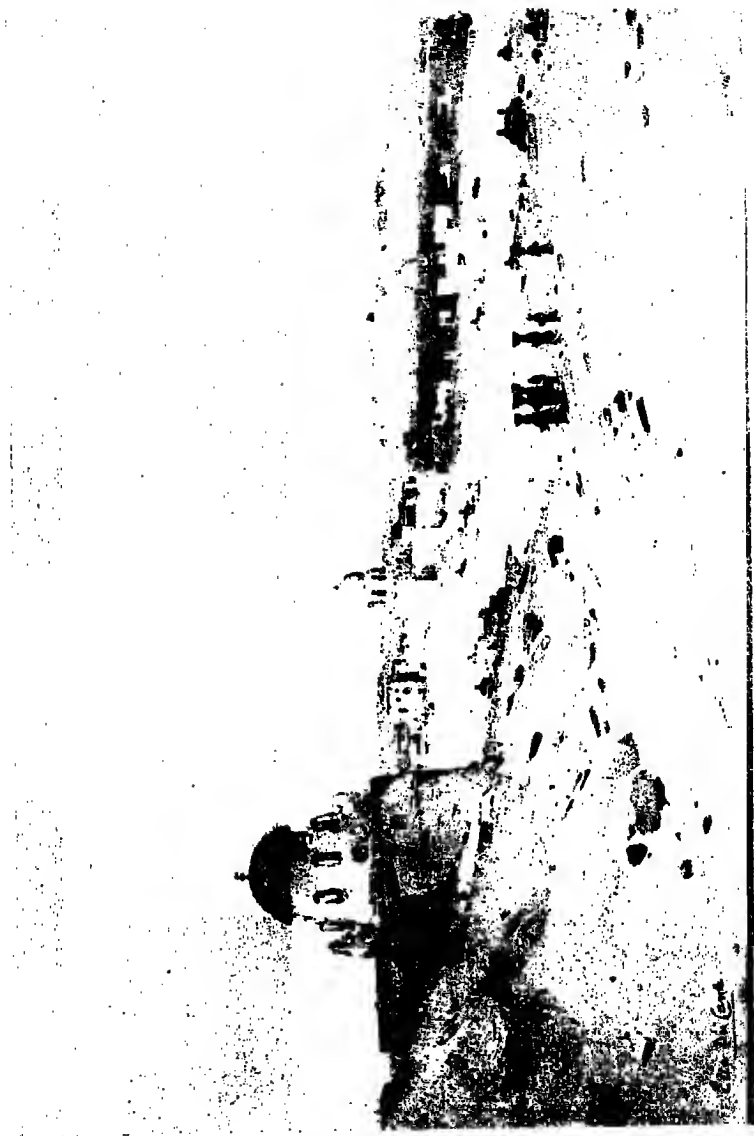
some large and imposing, many small and humble. Now let us take our bearings by the Pyramids, lying ten miles away to the west at Giza. Farther south, smaller and more remote, are the older Pyramids of Sakkara, of which the Step Pyramid is easily distinguishable. Almost at our feet in this direction lie the ruined dust-heaps which cover the site of el-Askar and el-Fostat. On part of the site a modern though poverty-stricken quarter has arisen, but absolutely nothing remains of the original buildings except the Roman fortress. The mosque of Amr, however, probably occupies the very site of the original mosque of el-Fostat.

Across this wilderness runs the line of the great aqueduct built by Saladdin's orders to carry water from the Nile to the Citadel at a higher level than the Khalig, or canal, which served the same purpose along the western border of the city. Beyond the line of windmills which crown these funeral hills are the Tombs of the Mamelukes, or Southern Cemetery. Next the Citadel itself fills the eye to the east, crowning the hill with the great mosque of Mohammed Aly. At its feet lies the great mosque of Sultan Hassan, with its modern neighbour the mosque of el-Rifayieh, comparable, however, only in size. In the time of Ismail, Sultan



## ARABIC CEMETERY, ASSUAN

THE heights to the south of the modern quarter of Assuan are practically one vast graveyard. Ancient and modern cemeteries cover the whole district. Some of the old graves have inscriptions on them in Cufic characters, and from these we learn that people were brought from a considerable distance to be buried here—natives of Edfu and other parts of Egypt.





Hassan's mosque was in ruins, and instead of restoring it, Ismail commenced the erection of this modern abortion, intending to outrival the original. It was only completed in 1912, when that of Sultan Hassan was also restored.

Now, amid the maze of minarets to the north, pick out the two great spires of el-Moayyad set on the gate of the old city wall. They can still be distinguished by the fresh colour of the upper parts, which were only recently restored. That is the Bab-el-Zuweyla. To the right of it, a little farther off, may be seen the minarets of the great university mosque of el-Azhar, identified by the peculiar twin tops on one of the spires. Behind the spires of el-Moayyad are a host of others with which we must get to closer quarters. Meantime, however, to finish the circle of the panorama, note to the north-west the varied roof-line of the modern city, stretching away to the Nile and beyond it.

Leaving Ibn-Tulun's mosque, we may drive straight to the Bab-el-Zuweyla, passing the mosque of the Darwishes on the way, crossing Mohammed Aly's street at an angle not far from the Khedivial Library and Arab Museum, and approaching the great gate by the Tentmakers' Bazaar; but a more interesting route is to bend

slightly to the right towards the Citadel, thus passing below the towering shot-holed walls of Sultan Hassan's great mosque, looking up again to that of Mohammed Aly. Then from under the walls of the Citadel the Darb-el-Ahmar leads us past many interesting mosques, especially that of Ibrahim Aga (originally built by Akhsunkur, and generally known as the Blue Mosque on account of its wonderful Persian tiles) and that of Mardani with a beautiful screen of old *mushrabeeh* woodwork. The street sweeps round to the left and brings us under the great wall by the Bab-el-Zuweyla. Here we turn sharp to the right into the city, and in a moment are in the thick of the city of the Arabian Nights, for it was here that the young man from Baghdad in "The Story told by the Christian Broker," having already lost his heart to the beautiful customer of the merchant Bedr-el-Din, proceeded also to lose his hand.

I walked forth into Beyn-el-Kasrein and proceeded thence to Bab-Zuweyla, where I found the people crowding together so that the gate was stopped up by their number, and as destiny willed, I saw there a trooper, and, unintentionally pressing against him, my hand came in contact with his pocket, and I felt it and found that it contained a purse, and I caught hold of the purse and took it from his pocket.

But the trooper felt that his pocket was lightened, and

putting his hand into it found nothing, upon which he looked aside at me, and raised his hand with the mace and struck me upon my head. I fell to the ground and the people surrounded us, and seized the bridle of the trooper's horse, saying, "On account of the crowd dost thou strike this young man such a blow?" But he called out to them and said, "This is a robber." On hearing this, I feared. The people around me said, "This is a comely young man, and hath taken nothing." While some, however, believed this, others disbelieved, and after many words the people dragged me along, desiring to liberate me; but, as it was predestined, there came at this moment the Walee and other magistrates entering the gate, and seeing the people surrounding me and the trooper, the Walee said, "What is the news?" The trooper answered, "By Allah, oh Emir, this is a robber. I had in my pocket a blue purse containing twenty pieces of gold, and he took it while I was pressed by the crowd." "Was any one with thee?" asked the Walee. The trooper answered, "No." And the Walee called out to the chief of his servants, saying, "Seize him and search him." So he seized me, and protection was withdrawn from me, and the Walee said to him, "Strip him of all that is upon him." And when he did so they found the purse in my clothes, and the Walee, taking it, counted the money, and found it to be twenty pieces of gold, as the trooper had said, whereupon he was enraged and called out to his attendants, saying, "Bring him forward." They therefore brought me before him, and he said to me, "Oh, young man, tell the truth. Didst thou steal this purse?" And I hung down my head towards the ground, saying within myself, "If I answer that I did not steal it, it will be useless, for he hath produced it from my clothes; and if I say I stole it, I fall into trouble." I then raised my head and said, "Yes, I took it." And when the Walee heard these words he wondered, and called wit-



nesses, who presented themselves and gave their testimony to my confession. All this took place at Bab-Zuweyla. The Walee then ordered the executioner to cut off my hand, and he cut off my right hand, but the heart of the trooper was moved with compassion for me, and he interceded for me that I should not be killed. So the Walee left me and departed. The people, however, continued around me, and gave me to drink a cup of wine, and the trooper gave me the purse, saying, "Thou art a comely youth, and it is not fit that thou shouldst be a thief."

The gate has its own traditions. The old Sheikh-el-Mitwally, after whom it was originally named, though long departed this life, is supposed to take up his abode behind the gate when not in residence at Mecca, where he spends the most of his time. He is possessed of great healing powers, and to pray at his gate is the safe cure for most ailments. You must, however, leave some visible token of your visit upon the gate, which is thus hung with rags and scraps of clothing of all sorts. If your tooth aches in Cairo, the true cure is to have it drawn *and* hang it upon the Bab-el-Zuweyla. This belief is not merely a matter of tradition; it is firmly held to this day, as can be seen by the number of people praying at the gate at almost any time you may pass through.

Outside the gate, high up on the walls, hang what look like an enormous pair of dumb-bells for



## THE ROAD FROM ASSUAN TO SHELLAL

A BROAD sandy track leads through the old cemeteries from Assuan to Shellal. Beyond the Arab cemetery, where the more important tombs of the wealthy lie side by side with the modest heap of stones which marks the last resting-place of his humbler neighbour, lies a small enclosure where some hundreds of English soldiers lie buried, not killed in action, but victims of the fever which decimated their ranks during a summer when Assuan was the headquarters of the English garrison during the Sudan rebellion.





a giant of ancient days. They are said to be ancient manacles or leg-chains for prisoners.

Inside the gate, the street is full of interest. On the left is the mosque of el-Moayyad, with its great door, taken from the mosque of Sultan Hassan, and the side pillars of red granite from an ancient Egyptian temple. It is popularly known as the Red Mosque. On the right, a little further along, if you can find it, just beyond another mosque, is a small crooked street leading into another, in which stands a delightful example of an old native house, once the property of a Sheikh Gamal-el-din and which has been carefully restored and thrown open to the public by the Committee for the Preservation of Arab Monuments. What enlightenment one may get from a study of this house as to the life depicted in the Arabian Nights!

The street in which it stands is so narrow that its *mushrabeeh* window-screens actually project beyond the plane of those in another house across the street—so much for the building regulations of el-Kahira. It may be mentioned in passing that, as the result of these narrow streets, the native quarters are the only place in Cairo where a day of *khamseen* can be spent with any approach to

comfort. They are cool by comparison, and the hot sand wind can find no entrance.

The doorway is handsomely carved in stone, and the door itself is massive and ornamental. It opens into an arched L-shaped passage, leading into the central court round which the house is built. Notice the idea of that L-shape; it is so that, when you enter the house from the street, warning may be given of your approach before you enter the court, in which you might surprise some of the *harém*, the women of the house. The court itself is rather small, but very beautiful, with a great open gallery or balcony room along one side, and a series of little doors and screened windows on the others. There is only one door in the corner, which looks a little more imposing than the rest on account of the beautiful scroll work round it and the few steps leading up to it. The old *boäb*, or guardian of the place, has previously demanded your two piastres for the ticket of the Committee, and now precedes you through this door, but he has little English, and you are left to find out for yourself the meaning and purpose of the different parts of the house. The passage into which you follow him is narrow, the stairs steep, and the whole thing looks

like a servants' entrance to the house. You soon lose all sense of direction or plan, the passages twist and turn so much, and seem to branch off in all directions and lead nowhere. Here and there in the walls of the passage are all sorts of little doors, sometimes no bigger than a small cupboard door. Opening one of these by chance, you find it is not a cupboard, but a passage which twists in and out apparently inside the walls, and comes out again somewhere else, and you begin to understand the mysterious way in which people appeared and disappeared in *The Arabian Nights*. You are shewn a tiny low-roofed little room about the size of a cupboard, with peculiar nodules of glass let into the roof, but no ventilation whatever. That is the real Turkish bathroom as it exists in an ordinary private house, and if your visit is paid on a hot day in spring, and at an hour when the sun happens to be beating upon that roof, you will understand easily how the heat is obtained, for such a room in Egypt can be unbearably hot. Stooping again to leave the bathroom, you notice a peculiar stone slab projecting from the wall supported on two decorated arches. That is the *suffeh*, on which coffee was made and kept hot on a charcoal brazier, which also served to prepare the



*narghileh* or water pipe from which the master and his friends were wont to "drink smoke." The thing itself is the origin of the modern sideboard, while the name has given us our word "sofa."

But now you emerge in a room of some size. It is nothing but four bare walls now, of course, and a *mushrabeeah* window-screen, but if you will examine the latter you will be ready now to understand the explanation of the name. In the centre of it is a small circular projecting piece like a tiny bay window, just big enough to hold a water-bottle, of the usual porous type which you have seen everywhere in the streets, and which cools the water so delightfully by evaporation. Now the Arabic verb to drink is "*ishrib*," and anything for drinking is "*shorba*" (hence the English word "sherbet"). *Mushrabeeah* originally meant the place where the water-bottle was set to cool—this little niche projecting into the street in the middle of the window, and so able to catch every whiff of air passing along the street. But somebody, not understanding, applied the name to the special class of woodwork, made of little bobbins and spindles, of which the screen is made, and from this the name was extended to cover



1  
WAITING FOR THE BREEZE, EARLY  
MORNING, ASSUAN  
2





that kind of woodwork in all the alien uses to which it has since been put by foreigners.

Wandering along the corridors and trying every door, you next find yourself in the great gallery or balcony room overlooking the court you first entered. From this a few steps will carry you to the chief room of the house, the *ka'ah* or reception hall. It is a magnificent room, high, dark, and cool; the walls are beautifully decorated with mosaic inlays, in characteristic Arabesque patterns, up to a considerable height, and friezes of Arabic lettering worked into designs higher up. Note the peculiar arrangement of the floor, which is not all on one level, but rises in low terraces at each end of the room. The door opens in the middle of one side of the room, and the floor opposite the door is the lowest part of the room. This is the *durka'ah*, the raised parts are the *leewans*, and at once remind you of the text, "Friend, come thou up higher," for the *leewan*, and especially the higher of the two, that to the right of the door, is the place of honour. The *durka'ah* is paved with white and black marble in geometrical patterns. If the room were on the ground floor there would be a fountain in the middle of it, and you leave

your shoes there before ascending to the *leewan* beside your host. The *leewan* is covered with matting in summer, and carpets in addition in winter. A mattress and cushions are placed round the three walls, and these form the *deewan* or divan. The roof is of wooden beams, the whole beautifully painted and gilded in designs like the stars of heaven. In the centre of the roof, above the *durka'ah*, is a lantern, the windows filled with the typical stained glass, which is so beautiful when properly seen and understood. In these days the Arabs did not understand the use of lead in making a frame for leaded lights. They therefore used plaster, and the frame had to be correspondingly thicker and deeper and the holes small. The glass used was of strong primitive colours, and seen directly in good light would have given a very glaring effect. To remedy this, the windows were set very high up so that you cannot see through them, but the light coming through the glass falls upon the white plaster framework, producing a softened effect of the most beautiful tones.

At one end of the room, above the chief *leewan*, is a great window, also of *mushrabeeah* of course, opening into the street. From the *side* of this

window you look straight into that of the house across the street, for this is where the two houses overlap, as you saw from the street. At the other end of the room a similar window looks into the court, and on the other side, high up on the wall, is another *mushrabeeh* screen. Entering a low doorway on this side, you find a steep flight of steps leading up by various turns to this gallery. It is the *harém* gallery, from which the women of the house could look down upon their master while he entertained visitors in the *diwan* or *selamlík* below.

So you go on. There is no apparent end to the mysteries of this labyrinth of a house. The stair you finally hit upon to carry you downstairs is as likely as not to carry you into an entirely different court, the second or inner court of the house, with a well in the middle, from which the house supply was drawn. That house is an endless source of delight to those who know it, and there are many others like it throughout Cairo, mostly utterly neglected now, or occupied as coal-stores and the like, or as dwellings of the poorest classes. The tiles and mosaics are still in wonderful preservation, though now dropping away. The *mushrabeeh* screens are still beautiful. The whole



shews what a wonderful city it must have been when these houses were occupied by the Mamelukes for whom they were built.

Back to the main street again, we may stop a few yards farther on to visit the lovely little mosque of el-Ghury, on the left. This mosque, built about 1504, is one of the most charming examples of the later type of small *madrassa*, or teaching mosque, which developed in the period of the Circassian Mamelukes. El-Ghury himself is an interesting figure in history. Once a slave of Kaït Bey, he was an old man of sixty, when in 1501, on the death of the latter's son, he was unwillingly nominated by the Mameluke Emirs as their leader. Egypt was by this time in sore straits. The discovery of the Cape route to India by the Portuguese was taking away her overland trade, and instigated by the merchants of Venice, el-Ghury equipped a fleet to attack the Portuguese settlements. But he soon had troubles to meet nearer home. He fell in 1516 fighting in Syria against the Turks, who in the following year entered Cairo, and hanged his successor, Tuman Bey, at the Bab-el-Zuweyla.

To the left here every little alley leads into the bazaars—the Syrian Bazaar, the Tunis Bazaar,



**ELEPHANTINE ISLAND AND ASSUAN  
FROM THE SIRDAR'S ISLAND**

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the Scent Bazaar, and the Spice Bazaar—which fill every nook and cranny in the section between this street and the Musky Street, which we are again approaching. At the crossing we go straight on down the Suk-el-Nahassin, or Coppersmiths' Bazaar (formerly known as Beyn-el-Kasrein, "between the two palaces" of el-Kahira). Passing the entrance to the Turkish Bazaar and the Shoe Bazaar, on the right, and that of the Goldsmiths' Bazaar on the left, a few hundred yards take us to the most striking assembly of great buildings in the city—the mosque (really a hospital or *maristan*) of Kalaün, the mosque of el-Nasr (with the little Gothic doorway of a Christian church, originally built at Acre by the Crusaders, and brought thence by the Saracen conquerors), and the mosque of Barkuk. Opposite the mosque of el-Nasr a broad street to the right leads to the Bet-el-Kadi, the house of the Judge, or Cadi's Court. Continuing northwards, at a junction of two streets meeting at an acute angle, is one of the most beautiful *sebils* or fountains in the city, for to erect and endow a *sebil* (generally with a school above) was a fashionable form of pious foundation in the old days.

So we come to the Bab-el-Futtuh, the gate



of Conquests, and the great mosque of el Hákim, with the peculiar minarets shaped like the top of a pepper castor, and quite unlike the usual pointed type. They are partly hidden by the great pyramidal shafts of masonry built up round, yet detached from them, probably to protect them and fit them into their places as part of the defences of the wall, upon which they are practically watch-towers. Climbing to the top of the first, we look back over the way by which we have come, from the mosque of Ibn-Tulun right through the city, and then down over the remains of the great wall at our feet. Right and left it runs for a considerable distance. To the left we can trace its direction westwards, and imagine how it once continued right to the Bab-el-Bahr (river gate), where the Nile then flowed, where until recently the Ismailia Canal ran, and where now stands the main station of the Government railways in Bab-el-Hadid Square. The Bab-el-Futtuh is under our feet, a massive bastioned gate, which might have been lifted bodily out of one of the old Norman castles in England, with all its defensive formations still perfect, and only marked by the new names which Napoleon gave to all the different towers and chief points along the wall. To the

right lies the Bab-el-Nasr, or gate of succour, and outside all, a great Mohammedan cemetery, more modern and more humble than the beautiful tombs of the Khalifs, which again we recognize to our right at the foot of the hills.

Away to the north we see a new Oriental city of spires and Saracen architecture — the newest Cairo of all, New Heliopolis, built since the beginning of this twentieth century, and still carrying on the traditional development of Cairo, always a little farther to the north. In a few years the whole district between will be built up, and the northern limits of Cairo then will be further to the north of this, the old northern boundary of the city where we stand, than the Roman fort of Babylon, the oldest building in the city, is to the south.

Entering the city again by the Bab-el-Nasr, we may return by a different street, the Gamalieh or Camel-drivers' quarters, to the Musky. On the right, just inside the gate, is another very interesting relic, the Khan-el-Gamalieh, a great *wekala* or *funduk*, the caravanserai or hotel of the old days, of which there are still many throughout the city, now occupied as warehouses, stores, or the like, and in a sadly tumble-down condition. Another very beautiful example is the Khan-el-Khalil, which



every tourist passes, for it lies in the middle of the Turkish Bazaar, to which it has given its name, though few ever see it. The plan of these old buildings is always the same, a broad courtyard with a great entrance gateway beautifully decorated. Inside, the court was packed with merchandise and beasts of burden of all kinds. It is arched round with stores or magazines, in which the merchants laid their wares.. Above the arches<sup>1</sup> are the living rooms of the hotel, mostly *harém* quarters, for almost every window has the *mushra-beeah* screen; and the plan is recognizable in that of many of the old-fashioned inns still existing in England. Such was the Khan-el-Musroor frequently referred to in *The Arabian Nights*, while in the following excerpt we have a description which almost seems to apply to this very Khan-el-Gamalieh which we are describing:—

Know, O King of the age, that I came to this country with merchandise, and destiny stayed me among your people. I was born in Cairo, and am one of its Copts, and there I was brought up. My father was a broker; and when I had attained to manhood he died, and I succeeded to his business; and as I was sitting one day, lo, a young man of most handsome aspect, and clad in a dress of the richest description,

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<sup>1</sup> It was in one of these arches that Joseph and Mary lodged "because there was no room for them in the inn."



## SAND-SLOPES ON THE WEST BANK OF THE CATARACT

THERE is a curious local superstition connected with this beautiful slope of golden sand, which runs in one unbroken sweep from the top of the hill to the shore below. It is said that if any one is suffering from fever or any malady, he must climb to the top (a difficult task under such circumstances), and lie down on his right side and roll down the slope. If the patient rolls to the foot without stopping, his cure is assured; if there should be a break in his descent, then a second or even a third attempt must be made; if these fail, then there is no hope for him. The superstition probably dates to very ancient days, when the Lords of the Cataract were said to effect miraculous cures.





came to me riding upon an ass, and when he saw me, saluted me: whereupon I rose to him to pay him honour; and he produced a handkerchief containing some sesame, and said, "What is the value of an ardeb of this?" I answered him, "A hundred pieces of silver." And he said to me, "Take the carriers and the measurers, and repair to the Khan el Gáwalee in the district of Bab-el-Nasr; there wilt thou find me." And he left me and went his way, after having given me the handkerchief with the sample of the sesame. So I went about to the purchasers, and the price of each ardeb amounted to a hundred and twenty pieces of silver; and I took with me four carriers, and went to him. I found him waiting my arrival; and when he saw me he rose and opened a magazine, and we measured its contents, and the whole amounted to fifty ardebs. The young man then said, "Thou shalt have for every ardeb ten pieces of silver as brokerage, and do thou receive the price and keep it in thy care. The whole sum will be 5000, and thy share of it 500, so there will remain for me 4500, and when I shall have finished the sale of the goods contained in my store rooms, I will come to thee and receive it." I replied, "It shall be as thou desirest," and I kissed his hand and left him. Thus there accrued to me on that day 1000 pieces of silver, besides my brokerage.<sup>1</sup>

In the Gamalieh Street (or a continuation of it, for most of the streets wind in and out like a labyrinth, and change their names every hundred yards) is the mosque of the Hassanein, sacred to the memory of Hassan and Hussein, the two sons of Ali, the husband of Fatima, daughter of the

<sup>1</sup> "The Story of the Christian Broker," part of "The Story of the Humpback" (Lane's Edition).

Prophet Mohammed, and therefore the founders of the Fatimide or Shi'ite heresy. Hussein was slain at the battle of Kerbela in A.D. 680, and his head is supposed to be buried in this mosque, which, however, has been very much modernized. The annual festival of the Hassanein is still a rather gory business, which ladies had better avoid.

Straight on again, across the Sikket-el-Gedida (continuation of the Musky Street), we pass through the booksellers' quarter to the great university mosque of el-Azhar, mentioned in a former chapter, which is one of the sights not merely of Cairo but of the world. Detailed description may therefore be dispensed with ; it is in every guide-book.

Returning to the Sikket-el-Gedida and thence by the Musky Street to the Ataba-el-Khadra, we may now make use of Mohammed Aly's vandalistic improvement to carry us up to the Citadel. There, on the far end of the terrace which surrounds his "alabaster" mosque, we take our final look over the city and see where we have been. Again we begin with the Pyramids of Giza and Sakkara, and then, following the march of history, cross the river to the old Roman fort of Babylon. The mosque of Amr marks the site of Fostat. Then come the ruins of the first city itself with the

Aqueduct, and nearer, the sites of el-Askar and el-Katai. At our feet lies the great mosque of Ibn-Tulun, the only remaining building of el-Katai, and here we get a better idea of its great area and the size of its huge open court, which is supposed to be a copy of the holy Kaaba at Mecca. Again, a little to the right we have the mosque of Sultan Hassan in the square below, and can understand why it was chosen as the most suitable point from which to attack the Citadel itself in the fighting days of the later Mamelukes. One by one we identify the various minarets which enable us to pick out the route we followed—Ibrahim Aga, el-Moayyad, el-Ghury, el-Azhar, Kalāün, Barkuk, and finally el Hákim.

From this high point we get a better view of the modern city, stretching from the Ataba-el-Khadra by the Ezbekieh Gardens, past Shepherd's Hotel, and the great new buildings behind it in the Ismailia and Tewfikieh quarters, out towards Kasr-el-Nil Barracks, the Museum, and Kasr-el-Nil and Bulaq Bridges, with the green isle (Gezira) beyond, and the tops of the sloping masts and yards of the boats on the river between. Up the river lies Roda with its triple bridge, and beyond all Giza and again the Pyramids.





What a mighty city. In size, at least, it has surely justified its title of "The Victorious." It has conquered and covered every inch of ground left by the Nile as it receded further towards Bulaq, and now has crossed it with its bridges, and pursued its extensions towards Gezira Bulaq, Dacrour, and Giza; Kasr-el-Nil, Kasr-el-Dubara, and Kasr-el-Aili being tacked on to the Ismailia and Tewfikieh quarters of previous reigns. Zeitoun and (new) Heliopolis to the north have brought the ancient city of On<sup>1</sup> into touch with the Pyramids. A day's journey apart when they were built, they are now linked up by an hour's tram ride through almost continuous city and suburbs.

The mediaeval city of *The Thousand and One Nights* lies between them to-day, as, figuratively, she lies between them in history. Where in all the world can one find such a panorama of history, ancient, mediaeval, and modern?

*Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, by E. W. Lane.

*The Englishwoman in Egypt*, by E. W. Lane's sister (Mrs. Poole), 1845.

Cairo, Stanley Lane Poole.

*The Thousand and One Nights*, commonly called in England, *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. (Lane's Edition.)

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<sup>1</sup> The ancient site is, of course, by the Obelisk at Matarieh. See p. 28.

# THE TARBUSH



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE TARBUSH

NATIONALITY is largely a matter of degree in Egypt. To the uninitiated visitor, everything that wears a *tarbush* or a turban, or presents any other symptom of being Oriental, is "native." To the *soi disant* "Egyptian," an Armenian or a Syrian is as much a foreigner as a Greek or an Italian, while a Sudáni is a "nigger"; yet the half-Europeanized *effendi* in trousers and *tarbush* is himself as alien to the true spirit of the country as any foreigner. If he is of good family he is probably more than half Turk, and the Turk never did and never will acclimatize himself in the country. He despises the Egyptian as thoroughly as the latter does the Sudáni, and for similar reasons—the Turk is a gentleman. The Egyptian "Effendi"—the title means as little as our "Esq." on a business letter—is a *nouveau riche* of the

worst description, if his father happened to hold land when the boom came. If not, he would still have been a "fellah," and what a depth of contempt he can put into the word when he applies it to others. It is truly pathetic that the class-name of that which is in some ways the only really admirable class in the country, and is the mainstay of its wealth, should be a byword in the mouth of the puffed-up, half-educated, café-haunting effendi, who calls himself a Nationalist, and whose highest ambition is to be a Government official. The mixed population of the two great cities of Alexandria and Cairo is a thing altogether apart from the real native population of the country districts, or even from that of the native quarters of the cities themselves, especially Cairo.

Again there is as great a difference between Alexandria and Cairo as between Liverpool and Paris. Alexandria is purely a commercial city. Nine-tenths of the imports and exports of the country are carried by its shipping, and it is the centre of the cotton trade, which forms the bulk of the exports. It is, by the way, one of the paradoxes of Egypt that the value of the cotton crop, which is almost entirely exported, is often greater than the total returned by the Custom



## ELEPHANTINE ISLAND

THE island of Elephantine lies to the north of the first cataract, just opposite Assuan, and in all ages has been regarded as the key of Egypt from the south. Being the southern limit of the Roman Empire it contained a strong garrison of their troops. It was the traditional home of the kings of the VIth Dynasty, and has always enjoyed a great reputation for its fertility. The famous Nilometer on the east side of the island is one of the oldest in Egypt, and was not only used in ancient days to mark the height of the water and enable notice to be given to the agriculturalist, but it enabled the governors of the district to form an estimate of the revenue, as water, then as to-day, meant money in Egypt, and the greater the rise of the river, the greater the revenue.







House as the value of all the exports, including cotton. The explanation, of course, is that the value of the cotton is assessed, for export duty purposes, according to a method which results in systematic undervaluation.

The language of commercial circles is chiefly French and Italian; English is about as rare as Arabic. Indeed, Alexandria strikes a Cairo man as hardly native at all, for even the labourers, the quay porters, and the cab-drivers have a smattering of one or more European languages. Among the commercial classes the native is in a minority, and even those who wear the *tarbush* are largely Syrians and Armenians. If they are Egyptian born they are probably Copts, for the true Moslem rather despises commerce. This is largely on the principle of sour grapes, for he has no aptitude for it, such as the Copts and Levantines have, which has made them the clerks and accountants of the country. Even in the Government offices, Copts predominate in every department where knowledge of finance or business is required.

Greeks, of course, are everywhere in Alexandria, for the city was a Greek settlement even before Alexander's time, and its name has remained Greek even to the native, who calls it "Iskanderia."

Italians too are numerous and influential. The French have maintained their hold here, and have impressed their language upon the commercial and official life of the country, for French is still the official language of nearly all the Government departments. English is seldom heard in Alexandria outside of the English Club and their own intimate circles, and the solitary English newspaper only survives because of its circulation in Cairo and elsewhere.

Cairo, on the other hand, is essentially a native city. The great bulk of its population is native, though commercial circles contain a large proportion of French, Italians, and Greeks, mixed with Armenians and Syrians; while Government departments are largely officered by Englishmen, who write officially to each other in very bad French. Cairo is the official and educational centre of the country. Here are the chief Government offices, though in summer the actual administration is removed temporarily to Alexandria for climatic reasons. The Khedive and the Court are centred in Cairo, though they also move to Alexandria in summer. It is the centre of the tourist traffic which, much to the grief of the Alexandrian hotel- and shop-keepers, passes largely through Port

Saïd, or makes only the briefest stop in Alexandria. Indeed, the tourist traffic might almost be described as the chief industry of Cairo. The great hotels with all their native and European staffs, the hosts of guides, touts, *arbagehs* (carriage drivers), and every kind of hanger-on of tourist traffic, make the city very lively in the winter season. Cairo in summer is a very different, and in some respects a pleasanter place, for the real charm of Cairo is its native quarters. At Shepherd's Hotel you are on the verge of it, for every native funeral or wedding procession must pass Shepherd's; but at the Savoy Hotel, farther west, you could almost imagine yourself in Paris. At Mena House, again, or at the great new hotel at Heliopolis, one is obviously in Egypt. For Cairo's geographical position, just at the apex of the Delta, lying between the desert and the cultivated land, is typical of the city, which lies between the native and the foreign elements. In the outskirts of Cairo you may see true Bedouin Arabs in their distinctive costume, mounted on good camels with elaborate tasselled saddle-bags, passing along calmly indifferent to their foreign surroundings. You meet all kinds of people in the streets of Cairo and of all shades of colour and of every race in Africa

or the Near East. If it be interesting to the visitor who is only attracted by the variety of colour and costume, what must it be to those who have learned to distinguish the different nationalities and costumes, and can tell an Albanian or a Montenegrin from a Kurd or a Hindu? What Cairo was from the days of Solomon to those of Saladdin, when her trade made her the meeting place of East and West, she is still, the metropolis of the world.

But that is only casually seen in the European quarters. There you have the most undesirable side of Egyptian life predominating, the discontented native, a mental half-caste for whom there is no place in the country. Raised by a chance turn of fortune from his own place as an agricultural labourer or small farmer, educated just sufficiently to despise his own class but not sufficiently to fit him to enter any other, ashamed to follow his old occupation, and not qualified by capacity or training for any other, his one idea in life is to get into Government service, not merely for the social position it confers, but also because of the traditional opportunities it once conferred for subsidiary earnings. The rush for these appointments, of course, quickly exceeded the



## THE SIRDAR'S ISLAND AND ARAB SHEIKH'S TOMB FROM ELEPHANTINE

On the golden sandhill which rises in an abrupt slope from the water's edge is the little white tomb of an Arab sheikh, commanding a glorious view of *the whole cataract, crossed by the mighty dam above* which lies the vast lake which forms the reservoir. On the lower slope of the hill are the tombs of the princes and nobles of Elephantine of the days of the VIth Dynasty. They were excavated by Lord Grenfell in 1885 and are of considerable interest.



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supply, and the disappointed applicants, greatly aggrieved, have become the discontented, loafing, and talking section of the city population, the raw material of the Egyptian Nationalist party.

The truth is that the sudden accession of wealth to Egypt in recent years has been a very mixed blessing. It is not yet forty years since the whole country was groaning under the oppression of Ismail, when the fellaheen were robbed at every turn by taxation and every kind of oppression, and the worst offence a man could commit was to be suspected of wealth. To-day the sons of these men, or of such as managed to weather the storm with their lands still their own, are plutocrats, owners of broad acres yielding rents unequalled in any other country in the world, for £15 per acre per annum is quite a common figure for good cotton land, and many of them own hundreds of acres. These men are now wealthy beyond their wildest dreams, and they have never learned how to spend the money. They and their sons have been to Europe, but they have brought back with them only the vices of our civilization, and the most undesirable ways of spending money. Lacking any capacity for statecraft, they are denied any real share in the government of the country, though,

to tell the truth, they would be sadly disappointed with modern methods of government if they were compelled to follow them. That is what galls them—they are denied the pleasures of place and power which such wealth as theirs used to carry with them, and the opportunities which power offered in these good old days for money to make money. They have heard tales of the old Turkish Pashas who ruled the land from Mohammed Aly's time to Ismail's, for their own enrichment. They see all these fat jobs filled now by Englishmen, who do not even seem to know how to make use of their opportunities. Satan soon found plenty of mischief for such idle hands. The rise of the Nationalist party under Mustapha Pasha Kamel was the natural result of the circumstances of the country. Its disappearance under Lord Kitchener is a sad commentary on the progress of Egypt towards self-government. "Teaching the Egyptians to govern themselves" is a pretty dream which may come true some day, but not in our day. The older men, who can remember the days of Ismail, know when they are well off. The fellah of to-day knows how well off *he* is; but the miserable hybrid section of discontented town-dwellers must simply be suppressed, until such time as a truer education



## VIEW FROM THE SIRDAR'S ISLAND, ASSUAN

THE island of Atroun is commonly known as the Sirdar's Island, having been the property of Viscount Kitchener when he was Sirdar. It afterwards changed hands; but when the Government decided to forbid any buildings to be erected on the islands in the cataract basin, it became the property of the Government, and the garden is kept up at Government expense. As the rich vegetation of the island is one of the most beautiful features of the district, it is satisfactory to know that its palm groves and other fine trees will be preserved for ever.





and a healthier spirit will teach them the real interests of their country, and shew them their own real place in it. As landlords farming or supervising their own estates they might have done a great deal to improve the agricultural conditions of their country. As Nationalists they have only succeeded in shewing in record time the utter incapacity of the Egyptians to govern themselves.

*The Truth about Egypt*, by J. Alexander, 1911. (Cassell & Co.)





# THE ENGLISH RESIDENT



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE ENGLISH RESIDENT

“FOREIGNER,” as already explained, is a relative term in Egypt. There are foreigners who look like natives, and natives who are really foreigners. But the most foreign of all the foreigners is the Englishman, because, as a rule, he cannot in the least adapt himself to the different conditions of a foreign country, but must forthwith create his own atmosphere, and surround himself with the nearest possible imitation of the conditions under which he is accustomed to live at home. They say that a Frenchman who goes abroad will not be a week in a town anywhere till he has started a café. The Englishman is no less given to reproducing his own circumstances in a foreign country, but his first need is a sports club of some sort.

But what visitors to Egypt probably find it most difficult to understand is the degree to which the

English colony have succeeded in creating an atmosphere very like home. It is rather amusing to the residents to note the difficulty of friends from home in realizing that after all the place is really quite civilized. To them it is all so strange that it seems impossible that there can be Englishmen, and even Englishwomen, living in the middle of it all the time, to whom it is quite commonplace and matter of course, because it is so familiar. It is astonishingly easy to get accustomed to camels walking past your bedroom window in the morning. Amidst all these strange surroundings Englishmen live very ordinary lives, which are interesting or otherwise, just in as far as familiarity with their surroundings has bred contempt.

There are, of course, many little differences in life, especially in summer; but in winter the differences are mostly in favour of Egypt. The climate is on the whole delightful, with just enough of cold weather and dull or even wet days to remind one occasionally of home; and an occasional reminder of English winter weather is all one wants. One does not need to get up in the dark, for even the most diligent young Government official does not require to be at his Ministry before 8 o'clock, and it is never dark, even in the



## THE CATARACT BASIN FROM ELEPHANTINE ISLAND

THE calm, still water which surrounds the little rocky islets near Assuan makes it difficult to realize that the cataract with its rushing waters and strong currents lies only a few miles away. The immense blocks of granite of which so many of these islands are composed have been used since very ancient days for the carving of colossal figures, obelisks and sarcophagi, and were floated down the river on rafts by hundreds of men during high Nile even as far as Cairo. Nearly every great temple in Egypt is ornamented with Assuan granite, if not in the form of statues, then, as in the temple of the Sphinx, in immense blocks which form the walls and square pillars.







middle of winter, after 7. Office hours are easier than at home; as a rule, 8 to 1.30, with a good deal of margin at both ends for contraction, according to your grade in the service. Kasr-el-Nil bridge used to close to allow the river traffic to go through at 1.30, and most of the higher Government officials lived across the bridge in Gezira, and had to get across before then. Afternoon duties are not sufficiently severe to interfere with tennis, and in summer there are none at all.

In commercial circles the daily round is a little longer, and, of course, there are many employments in which the hours are really long and the work hard, but they are the exception rather than the rule in Egypt.

The necessary social organization is well maintained. There is the Turf Club, which has nothing to do with affairs of the Turf, but is merely the English Club, to which every one in the military or government sets belongs, professional men of various sorts, bankers, and selected members of the commercial community. There is the Khedivial Sporting Club at Gezireh, not quite so exclusively English, for many find their way into it from European commercial circles. There are two Anglican churches and one Presbyterian. There

are racing clubs, rowing clubs, golf clubs, tennis clubs, and every other sort of club necessary. There is a Y.M.C.A., a British Recreation Club for less wealthy members of the British community, and a Railway Institute which serves all the purposes of a social and sporting club for the many Englishmen, as well as others, employed in the Railways Administration. There is only one great lack, education. The atmosphere, especially the moral atmosphere, of Egypt, is not good for the upbringing of English children, and so every one who can possibly afford it sends his children home to school. That is why Egypt, though it is a colourable imitation of a white man's country, can never really be a white *woman's* country. Indeed it is the women on whom the burden of the country's foreignness mostly falls. Housekeeping is difficult and unsatisfactory. The style of the houses themselves is on the whole well adapted to the country, though fires, which are very necessary in winter, are only gradually coming into use. But the difficulty of servants and kitchen management is great, and there are practically only two alternative methods. The English "*Sitt*" may either give up the attempt to cope with the situation, as indeed most Englishwomen do, and

leave the whole thing to her cook, in which case she will have the satisfaction of living off the same round of menus, and a very limited round at that, year in, year out. She will know that things are such in her kitchen that she dare not allow another lady to see it—if indeed she dare go into it herself when her cook is there—and that she and her children are running more than a risk of typhoid fever all the time, for while native servants are extraordinarily quick in learning to do things as they are told, they never even begin to understand the meaning of cleanliness or decency according to our ideas.

Or, if she has been a well-trained housewife at home, she may put her back up and determine to have things as she has been accustomed to, in which case, if she does not break her heart altogether in the attempt, she will become well versed in all the arts and crafts of the Berberine *suffragi* (table-servant or house-man); she will earn the gratitude of her husband, and of all his bachelor friends, who will come to borrow her pudding recipes for their monotonous cooks; and she will want, and deserve, at least three months' leave every summer to recuperate and give her time to forget the sight of a black face. No, Englishwomen as a rule do not love Egypt!

The cost of living in recent years has, of course, gone up tremendously; rents, especially in the time of the boom, were simply ridiculous, from £150 to £500 being demanded for a flat in Cairo. But that has eased off a little with the increased supply, and although many things are still dear, on the whole it is not much worse than in large towns at home. It is the going home every year—unnecessary unless for the children—that keeps every one hard up.

Yet the life has great attractions and compensations. In winter you may be as gay as you like, for the hotel dances and concerts fill every night in the week, and there are always plenty of friends from home who seem to be as pleased to see you, a friendly face in this “far countree,” as you are to see them. They are very grateful for your assistance in the bazaars, where a little knowledge of Arabic goes a very long way, and (this is what amuses the resident) they seem peculiarly interested to see your house, and to understand how you can live in this heathen country.

As opposed to these alien amusements, however, the real native attractions of the country speak for themselves. The winter climate has already been referred to. The summer has only one real draw-



## ISLANDS OF THE FIRST CATARACT

INNUMERABLE islands lie in the basin of the cataract, some merely immense rocks and blocks of granite, others have little sandy bays, but a few of the larger islands such as Sehel and Saloug have strips of sparse cultivation, groups of palms and mimosa bushes. Many of the rocks show traces of the blasting and quarrying done at the time of the building of the great dam, when hundreds of *giassas* conveyed the stone to the head of the cataract, where that solid bank of masonry gradually rose until it became the greatest engineering feat of modern times.







back, there is too much of it. From April to October it is hot most of the time, and sometimes very hot, over 110° (Fahrenheit) in the shade. May is generally the hottest month, but in the early summer months the dryness of the atmosphere robs the heat of its worst terrors. A *khamseen* (hot sand wind) is a thing to be remembered, and is in its own way, though what a different way, about as bad as a London fog; but it seldom lasts more than a couple of days and the cool weather that always follows it is delightful. Indeed, it is just these contrasts that make life in Egypt so much more bearable than it would be elsewhere under anything like similar conditions. The very hot weather is not continuous; there are cool spells between, and even the hottest day is generally followed by a night which is at least relatively cool, sometimes even too cool for comfort. After all, hot days can be provided for, with a suit of *damoors* (a native cotton fabric, delightfully porous and cool), a solar topee, plenty of ice, and a good sleep in the afternoon. The cool of the evening and the glorious nights, especially on the desert or on the river, are a thing to dream of ever afterwards. Dining and sleeping out of doors, in the garden or on the roof, make

the night only the more pleasant for the contrast with the glaring heat and close confinement of the day. For, of course, during the heat of the day the only thing to do is to stop indoors and keep the house dark and cool ; woe betide the unfortunate *suffragi* who leaves a door or a window open for ten minutes. By such means you can keep the inside temperature of the house as much as thirty degrees below the outside heat during the hottest part of the day. But how stuffy it gets as the afternoon wears on, and what a relief it is when sunset makes it possible to open all up again and get some air, even though it is still hot air. You know that in an hour or two the cool north breeze will come up and bang the shutters and blow your mosquito net about, and make life worth living once more.

But these hot days and everlasting blue skies get monotonous after two or three months, and in autumn when the Nile rises the humidity of the atmosphere makes the heat more trying. It is then, however, as if by way of compensation, that Egypt, and especially the banks of the Nile, look most beautiful, and the greatest colour-feast of the country, the evening afterglow, is seen at its best. No artist or poet in prose has yet been able to set down the indescribable glories of the Egyptian

afterglow on the desert or on the flooded lands. It is the crowning glory of the colours of Egypt.

At sunset the whole human life of the country awakes again from the afternoon paralysis. The day's work over, the fellah homeward plods his cheery way to supper, smoke, and sleep. If it be Ramadan, the terrible month of the daily fast, the evening is devoted to feasting, followed by music, which to the unaccustomed ear makes the night hideous, the thrumming of the *darabukah*, the weird monotonous melodies of the native flute, or the voice of a *fiki* chanting the Korán in the garden of the pasha's house across the way. Yet that same music is itself one of the haunting charms of the country, the memory of which comes back to the erstwhile Anglo-Egyptian with peculiar insistence. At first utterly unintelligible, it seems quite barbarously unmusical; but the reason becomes apparent with a little study. The whole thing is based on an entirely different musical scale from ours, a scale possessing an apparently infinite variety of semi-tones and quarter-tones, of sharps and flats beyond belief, and allowing intervals quite beyond our conception. The result is music as elusive and unreproducible as the colour of the Egyptian afterglow, capable

of unlimited variation and possessing extraordinary power of expression. Listen carefully for half an hour to a native goat-boy playing his reed pipe in the evening on the desert, and you will realize that the apparent repetition of the same monotonous tune is really endless variation of a simple theme. It is the same with their singing, and they are always singing; every gang of labourers must have a good singing *raïs* to lead their "chantey," without which they cannot work in unison. They never seem to sing anything twice exactly in the same way. Many an hour the writer has spent on the roof trying to catch and set down the notes of the mueddin's call to prayer from the minaret of a neighbouring mosque. "Allah hu akbar" (Allah is greatest). It is a strange minor melody that reminds one of nothing so much as an old Scotch minor Psalm tune sung very flat. It is sung in a high and penetrating falsetto, and its infinite variation defies reproduction or imitation. You think you have got it, and you scribble it down hastily, read it over, and then wait for him to repeat it so that you may check it; but the next time it is all quite different. Yet you cannot put your finger on the difference; it is largely in the grace notes, but still more in the tone of the



singer. You would almost say it was in a different key. It is the same with all their music. The most stereotyped chants like the Moslem testification "La ilaha illallah, Mohámmed el rasool Allah" (There is no god but God, and Mohammed is his Prophet) are infinitely varied, and become only the more interesting the more you hear them. Happy is he that hath ears and can hear.

But the people to be envied are those who, with a real desire to know the country, make use of their opportunities to get some insight—it can never be much—into the conditions of life among the natives, the men in the *selamlík* and the women in the *harém*. The latter, of course, is a world by itself, entirely apart from the visible life of the country, and one of which the ordinary visitor can never see anything; and it is intensely interesting. There is no department of the life of the country where the difference from our own point of view is so striking and so radical. It is easy to be horrified at the conditions of virtual imprisonment, the absolute lack of all human interest in the secluded life of the *harém*. But the one thing you must realize is that they like it. A native lady of some position, asked how she spent the day in the *harém*, explained: "Oh, I sit on this

divan here, smoke, drink coffee, and talk or tell stories." "But when you are tired of that?" "Then I go over and sit on that other divan." "And after that?" "Why, then, I come back to this one again." Any Englishwoman who can realize that such a life is not merely not intolerable but actually enjoyable, has gone a long way towards grasping the fact that the difference between East and West is one of point of view.

Indeed, that is the sum and substance of the whole difference between modern Egypt and Western countries. Outside differences are becoming rapidly less marked. The general aspect of the towns, at least in the modern quarters, is European. European languages are spoken, European dress worn, European ideas are on every one's lips; but, deep down, the native point of view is entirely unchanged. He bows gracefully to European methods under compulsion; but he does not attempt to understand them, or really to assimilate them. His notions of justice, for example, are still his own, and poles apart from ours. Our idea that it is better that a hundred guilty should escape than that one innocent man should be punished is incomprehensible to him; and we do not realize how deeply





## PHILAE

THE beauties of Philae are lost for ever. Since the raising of the dam at Assuan in 1912 her glories have departed, and poor Philae can no longer claim to be the eighth wonder of the world. From December to May only the capitals and a small portion of the columns are visible above the water, and even when in summer the water recedes, the buildings are much disfigured by the slimy deposit which clings to them. The temple has been underpinned at great expense, so antiquarians are satisfied that it will remain unharmed by the flood as far as its stability is concerned, but all true lovers of Philae mourn the loss of the setting of the temple. Her palm trees are no more; even during the months when the temple of Isis, or "The Lady of Philae," as Isis was called, is uncovered, no vegetation has time or energy to spring to life and shroud the severe setting of the Philae of to-day. She sits gazing reproachfully at that solid bank of masonry which has caused her ruin—the great Dam of Assuan.

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that idea is ingrained in our whole system of courts, evidence, etc., which we have enforced upon Egypt. The Oriental idea is quite the reverse, and he prefers his own—still.

Again, our maxim that the ideal government is that which interferes least with the liberty of the subject is as completely strange to him. That has never been the Oriental idea, and most emphatically it has never been the idea of those who governed Egypt. It is a king's business to know what is good for his people, and to see that they do it. How can they be expected to know as well as he what is good for them? Had Mohammed Aly not adopted that policy, cotton would never have been grown in Egypt. Unless a similar policy is adopted now, they will never give up their own antiquated and short-sighted methods of spoiling the crop by trying to get too much out of it. But that is a difficult policy for an Englishman to adopt. How well it has been done by Englishmen in Egypt the history of the last thirty years shews. Lord Cromer knew how to run an Oriental country, and Egypt prospered under his rule. The subsequent five years of the Gorst regime we had best pass over in charitable silence—it was an interlude, and it served its purpose in convincing

every one who required conviction that no other policy than that of Lord Cromer would serve in Egypt. And then the one man best fitted to apply that policy in Egypt was selected for the post. It is too soon yet to speak of Lord Kitchener's work in Egypt, for it is only begun. But only those who knew what Egypt was like during the interlude can appreciate the change he has already made.

*Veiled Woman*, by Marmaduke Pickthall, 1913. (Eveleigh Nash.)

## ON THE RIVER



## CHAPTER XV

### ON THE RIVER

It is not till the visitor reaches Cairo that he begins to realize the greatness and importance of the Nile. Neither at Alexandria nor Port Saïd is it visible at all, though there are said to have been mouths at both these points in ancient times; but now there are only the two main channels by which it finds its way into the sea, at Rosetta and Damietta. The latter was the chief port of the country in Arab days, before Mohammed Aly made the Mahmoudieh Canal from the Nile to Alexandria. It was here, for example, that Saint Louis landed on his disastrous expedition in 1249. It was famous in later days for the export of cotton cloth, of which trade only the name now survives, "Dimity." The port itself is rapidly falling into decay.

For the greater part of the year now little



water passes through these mouths to the sea, for when the Barrage is closed down in spring, little is left to flow down the natural channels. The great canals which branch off from the river above the Barrage are become the real mouths of the river carrying the water to be spread over the land. Indeed, so little water remains in the main river that it is not enough to keep back the inrush of salt water from the sea, and often a *sudd* or earthen dam has to be built across the mouth to keep the sea out, and preserve for use in drinkable condition the poor trickle that remains of the mighty Nile. It sounds impossible, but it is almost literally true that at low Nile not a drop of the Nile water reaches the sea.

But there is no hint of all this at Cairo. From the Delta Barrage, 12 miles below Cairo, to Assuan Dam the river is indeed a sight worth seeing. Go down of a morning in spring to the *Sahel* at Rod-el-Farag, where the wheat crop is coming in from all up and down the river to the great market there. For over a mile the banks are lined with *gyassas* or small native sailing-boats, packed so thick that they must lie bow on to the bank, because there is not room for them all to berth broadside. Each is laden with grain in bulk, or in sacks,



## THE NILE ABOVE ASSUAN



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which are themselves almost a work of art in black, brown, and red. Or from the landing-stage at Kasr-el-Nil bridge watch the tourist steamers casting off with their load of pleasure-seekers to plough their way slowly up-stream for ten days to the great dam at the first cataract. Think of all they will see in that 550 miles of river up to Assuan, all the ruined temples and tombs scattered in little villages along the banks or hidden away among the hills like the tombs of the kings at Luxor. Think of the Dam itself, now like a great natural lake extending for more than 100 miles up the river when full, and submerging the ruins of Philae almost entirely for a considerable part of the year. Even there you are only on the doorstep of the Nile, where its chief use as the only means of communication between Shellal and the second cataract at Wady Halfa begins, the second stage on the way to Khartoum. There again you are only entering on a new river, or rivers rather, the Blue Nile stretching away into the mountains of Abyssinia, and the White Nile to the equatorial lakes.

All that mighty river, and not a drop of it reaches the sea, because it is needed for the irrigation of that insignificant little triangle of green land

away up in the corner of the Mediterranean. Take a day's sail from Cairo down to the Delta Barrage, the key of the system, and think of the failure and the triumphs it represents; conceived by the French engineer Bellefonds de Linant in 1833, begun by his compatriot Mougel Bey in 1842, the foundation-stone laid by Mohammed Aly himself in 1847, abandoned as a hopeless failure in 1867, but finally repaired and completed by Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff in 1885-90, to become only the first of many such along the course of the river.

But best of all, see the Nile in early October, in full flood, pouring down bank full and nearly half a mile wide, swirling and eddying along with its wealth of water and silt, that are both meat and drink to the land, the father of plenty, the husband of Egypt. No wonder that the ancient Egyptians worshipped the river as a god, or that the Arabs still celebrate the old festival of the symbolic marriage of the Nile to his bride at the Foum-el-Khalig in August. There may be greater rivers in the world, but there is none more impressive than the Nile.

It is impressive by its variety and its contrasts. From the sea to its sources it passes through a whole series of different climates; almost temperate

and with quite an appreciable rainfall on the sea-coast, absolutely rainless from above Cairo through Luxor and Assuan, then passing into a tropical climate with heavy summer rainfall in the Sudan. In the upper reaches the Atbara and the Blue Nile find their way to the mountains of Abyssinia, whose torrential rains bring down the silt that makes the precious "red water" of the early flood, while the White Nile threads its way through the *sudd* towards the great lakes, a region of permanent tropical vegetation, great forests, and ample rainfall.

It is one long succession of contrasts, the contrast between ancient civilization and modern semi-barbarism, between the glorious monuments of the ancient Egyptians and the mud huts of their modern descendants, and above all the contrast between the marvellously fertile cultivated lands within reach of its waters and the barren and everlasting desert beyond its reach.

The broad Delta is as unlike the narrow strip of cultivation in Upper Egypt as ancient is unlike modern. Below the Cairo Barrage the river is hardly ever visited by travellers, who are content to pass straight from their steamer at Alexandria or Port Saïd to Cairo, where the Delta narrows into



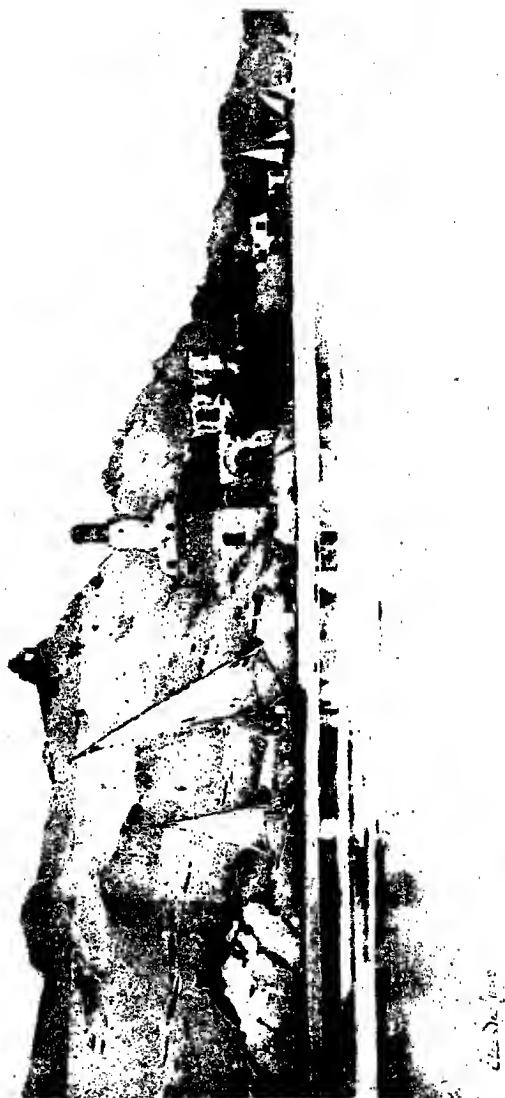
the Nile valley and Egypt becomes literally nothing but the banks of the Nile. Below the Barrage the Nile is hardly navigable except during the few months of high Nile, and the bulk of the traffic goes by the canals, especially by the Mahmoudieh Canal to Alexandria. Above Cairo the tourist steamers ply regularly throughout the few months of the Upper Egypt season, until in early spring the river falls so low that they can hardly find their way between the shifting sandbanks. Often a steamer gets hung up on one of these in spring, and if it cannot be dug out or lifted almost bodily off, it has to lie there till the rising flood comes again in autumn to raise it from its long summer bed. It is only from Cairo to Assuan, therefore, or perhaps as far as the second cataract at Wady Halfa, that the river is known to the ordinary visitor ; but in that relatively small part of the river there is enough to provide material for a life's study.

Sailing from Cairo, and ploughing steadily up against the stream, frequent halts are made to enable passengers to visit the antiquities which are dotted all along the banks of the river from Bedrasheen to Abu Simbel, a distance of nearly 800 miles. There is just enough truth in the statement that "the ancient history of Egypt goes against



## BELLÂL, NUBIA

On the east bank of the river, only a short distance from Shellal and nearly opposite Philae, is the village of Bellâl (el Meshhed), one of the few Nubian villages which has not been completely submerged by the heightening of the Assuan dam and the consequent raising of the water-level to another 23 ft. in this part of the large lake which is now formed by the reservoir. The mosque of Bellâl, with its minaret and dome, is very old, and stands out in sharp contrast to the little village of mud houses which it dominates. The spur of the hill above is crowned with a sheikh's tomb.





the stream" to make it a possible thread upon which to hang a consecutive account of these monuments. Let it be remembered, however, that the prehistoric Egyptians originally came *down* the river to Memphis, and that the reverse movement only dates from historic times.

At Bedrasheen, then, we are in the middle of the oldest historic civilization of Egypt—the Step Pyramid of Zozer of the IIIrd Dynasty at Sakkara and those of Seneferu at Meydum and Dahshur, the three Great Pyramids of the IVth Dynasty and the Sphinx at Giza, the Pyramids of the Vth and VIth Dynasties at Abusir and Sakkara, and those of the XIth and XIIth Dynasties at Dahshur, Lisht, and Illahun. At the latter we are abreast of the Fayum, the Lake Moeris of the XIIth Dynasty, to which the railway line strikes off from Wasta on the west bank of the river. The modern Birket-el-Karun is all that is left of the ancient lake, while almost nothing remains of the famous Labyrinth, and little even of the more modern buildings of the Greek Arsinoë.

Passing the modern town of Beni Suef we are into Upper Egypt, where cotton begins to yield chief place to sugar, for the latter becomes almost the most important industry right up to Assiut,

and even beyond. This is also the land of the Copts, who have long made this part of Egypt their special preserve, and whose convents and monasteries, mostly in ruins, are scattered along the hills which bound the Nile valley and over the adjacent deserts. Here, near Beni Suef, on the banks of the Bahr-el-Yussef, was the site of the ancient city of Heracleopolis, dating originally from about the IXth Dynasty, which seems to have formed a stepping-stone, as the capital of the country, between Memphis and Thebes, and to have preceded the great XIIth Dynasty city of the Fayum.

Minieh is a modern town, now of considerable importance, owing to the sugar industry which the Khedive Ismail spent so much money on. He acquired great estates here, put them under sugar cultivation, and built factories for the crushing of the canes, and light railways to bring their produce down to the river, now the main line of the railways. Their career since has been chequered, but they are still more or less flourishing, and provide a large part of the native consumption of sugar as well as maintaining a considerable export. Their tall chimneys and factory buildings add another element of contrast to the scene.

South of Minieh we reach the next great site of antiquarian interest, the rock tombs of Beni Hassan, belonging to the dynasties of the Middle Kingdom. "To the artist these famous grottoes are of the highest interest as the birthplace of Greek decorative art. The principal sculptural ornaments, such as the spiral, the key pattern, and the so-called honey-suckle pattern—the latter, according to Professor Flinders Petrie, a florid imitation of the Egyptian lotus pattern—which are often regarded as purely Greek in origin, are undoubtedly Egyptian."<sup>1</sup> They are also of great historic value for the wonderful pictures they contain of the actual life of the people of these days. Here also is a rock temple to the lion-headed goddess Pakht, the Roman Diana, or Artemis of the Greeks, after whom it is named the cave of Artemis.

From Beni Hassan to Thebes, a distance of nearly 300 miles, ruins of temples and tombs, Roman forts, Coptic convents, and grottoes, are so numerous that only the names of a few can be mentioned. Perhaps the most interesting is Tell-el-Amarna, the short-lived capital of Amenhotep IV. This famous heretic king of the XVIIIth Dynasty, abandoning Thebes and changing his

<sup>1</sup> Reynolds Ball, *Cairo of To-day*.



name to Akhnaten, set up his new religion of the worship of the sun alone, about 1400 B.C. in this new city. But on his death things reverted to the old ways, and after less than fifty years of existence his capital was left deserted. Its tombs and palaces were excavated not many years ago, and yielded many beautiful objects; but the greatest historic value attached to a unique series of "letters" on clay tablets, dealing with the diplomatic relations of Egypt in these days with the Syrian and Babylonian kingdoms.

Here the river scenery changes for a time, owing to the nearer approach of the hills to the river banks forming the precipices of Gebel Abu Feda, and here also the nut-bearing dom palm, as contrasted with the date palm so familiar in Lower Egypt, is first seen. The historic interest of these cliffs is connected with Athanasius and the early Christian Church in Egypt.

Assiut, another important modern town, is the site of the Barrage which feeds the Ibrahimieh Canal. This is a modern irrigation canal constructed to reinforce the old Bahr-el-Yussef, which branched off a little to the north of Gebel Abu Feda towards the Fayum. The bazaars here are of great interest; the natives specialize in the



## TEMPLE OF KERTASSI, NUBIA

Six Hathor-headed pillars are all that remain of the temple of Kertassi, though the original building would appear to have closely resembled the Kiosk at Philae. The temple now stands close to the edge of the river, and in order to preserve it from the encroaching waters a stone embankment has been built on two sides of it, which is to be regretted from a picturesque point of view, but necessary in order to preserve the remains of this charming little temple.



Stella Di. Case



making of a peculiar type of shawl decorated with silver, which every visitor to Egypt knows. They also make a special kind of pottery from a local red clay. The chief peculiarity of the ware is that it is not made on the wheel in the ordinary way, but in moulds.

From Assiut another hundred miles of charming and varied river scenery brings us to Baliana, the starting-place for Abydos. This is one of the oldest centres of civilization in the country, but is rather difficult to place in chronological order for this reason. Abydos, in the first place, probably dates back to prehistoric times, for it was the capital of the very earliest dynasties, and probably even of the kings of Upper Egypt before the union of the two kingdoms under Mena. It ought, therefore, to be placed in the down-stream progress of prehistoric civilization. But owing to its traditional importance as the supposed burial-place of Osiris, the head and source of the Egyptian religion, it was the fashion for kings of many later dynasties to be buried or to erect memorials at Abydos. The result is that while Abydos is rich in tombs which go back to the very earliest dynasties, it has also been beautified by buildings of much later date and of many different periods. Thus the

great temple of Osiris was built by Sety I. of the XIXth Dynasty and finished by his successor, Rameses the Great, who also built another temple to Osiris close by. But in another part of this great Necropolis there are tombs dating back to the oldest Egyptian Dynasties, while a third section dates mostly from the Middle Kingdom. Abydos is therefore, in a way, the meeting-place of all the dynasties.

A few miles south of Bahāna the new railway line to Khargeh, the great oasis in the Libyan desert, strikes off westward from the main line. Khargeh is of special antiquarian interest from the fact that it possesses the only great relic of the Persian invasion in the temple of Ammon there.

Kenēh, the next town of any size on the river, is chiefly famous for its manufacture of *kullehs* or earthenware pots of all kinds, boatloads of which have already become a familiar sight on the river. Almost opposite it is the small temple of Denderēh, one of the most beautiful and best preserved of any in Egypt, dedicated to Hathor, the Egyptian prototype of Aphrodite and Venus. Built in the first century A.D., it is the first of the more modern antiquities of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, whose presence is so confusing among their far

more ancient neighbours. But it occupies the site of an older temple which was believed to date back to the earliest dynasties, and was added to not only by kings of the Middle Kingdom but also by those of the Great Empire.

Of the bewildering conglomeration of tombs and temples in Thebes, which we are now approaching, it is almost impossible to speak with any attempt at order. It can only be made intelligible at all by recalling the fact that the history of Thebes as the capital of part, if not the whole, of Egypt, dates back to the Middle Kingdom or before it, and that, centuries afterwards, it became the undisputed metropolis of the country under the Great Empire.

During the whole period of decadence, in which the capital shifted further north to Tanis, Bubastis, and Saïs, Thebes still remained a town of considerable importance and was sometimes the capital of a rival or independent dynasty. Finally, when the Ptolemies took over the country, they made Thebes (it was they who gave it that name) and Syene (Assuan) the centre of their religious interest, second only to Alexandria itself.

The result is that the memorials of Karnak and Thebes represent practically every period in Egyptian history from 3000 B.C. to A.D. 500 ; and



in some cases, as in that of the Great Temple of Karnak, periods almost as far apart as these are actually represented by different parts of one building. It needs much more knowledge, time, and patience than the ordinary visitor is likely to possess, to give the necessary detailed study to all the monuments which line both banks of the river here. It may serve the purpose, however, to summarize the situation in the broad statement, that the oldest monuments, dating from the Middle Kingdom, are comparatively small in number; that the greatest in size and dignity are the megaliths of the Great Empire, but that the ornament and artistic work of the later Ptolemaic work is, in a way, the most beautiful of all. With that we must leave it to the visitor to choose for himself among the monuments which he will examine carefully, which he will merely visit, and which he will pass altogether, for to go through them all conscientiously would require the rest of his natural life. He will do well rather to pick out a few, study these sufficiently to have some idea of their age and style and their place in the history of Egypt, and take the rest for granted. For details as to how best to carry out this advice, we can only refer him to his guide-books, but the



## GERF HUSEIN, NUBIA

THE small rock temple of Gerf <sup>U</sup>Husein was constructed by Selion, the governor of Ethiopia, by order of Rameses II. It has a certain resemblance to this king's great work at Abu Simbel, crudely though effectively carried out. The four colossal statues outside, and the figures of the king forming the columns which support the inner hall, all recall the temple of Abu Simbel. The temple was called by the Egyptians Per-Ptah, the House of Ptah, as it was consecrated to Ptah and his satellites of Memphis. In a niche in the holy of holies there are four sitting figures of Ptah, Rameses deified, Ptah-Tenen, and Hathor.





following geographical list of the chief monuments may serve as an index :—

### LIST OF CHIEF MONUMENTS AT THEBES

#### EAST BANK OR TOWN OF THEBES

*Temple of Luxor*, XVIIIth Dynasty. Begun by Amenhotep III. Granite chapel by Thotmes III. Added to by Rameses II., of whom three colossal statues survive. Sanctuary rebuilt by Alexander the Great.

*Great Temple of Karnak*. Begun by XIIth Dynasty. Added to by many kings of XVIIIth and XIXth. Again enlarged by Libyan kings of Bubastis (XXIInd Dynasty), also by XXVth and XXXth Dynasties, and finally by Ptolemies. Other smaller temples date from XVIIIth Dynasty to Ptolemaic times.

*Medamut*, an ancient suburb of Thebes. Of the temple of Mut, begun by Amenhotep II. (XVIIIth Dynasty) and added to under the XIXth Dynasty, little remains but part of a colonnade erected in Ptolemaic times, in which, however, some of the original columns were incorporated.

#### WEST BANK OR NECROPOLIS

*Kurnah*. Temple of Sety I. (XIXth Dynasty).

*Drah abu'l Negga*. Tombs of XIth, XIIIth, and XVIIth Dynasties were discovered here.

*Tombs of the Kings*. From XVIIIth to XXth Dynasties, including many of the Pharaohs of the Great Empire.

*Der-el-Bahri*. Temple of Queen Hatshepset (XVIIIth Dynasty). Inscriptions frequently erased and restored. Additions by Ptolemies.

*El Asasif*. Tombs, mostly of the XXVth and XXVith Dynasties.

WEST BANK—*continued.*

*Ramesseum.* Built by Rameses the Great (XIXth Dynasty).  
Very badly preserved. Remains of huge colossus.

*Sheikh Abd el Kurna.* Tombs of high dignitaries of the XVIIIth Dynasty.

*Der el Medineh.* Temple begun by Ptolemy IV.

*Kurnet Murraï.* Tombs, some dating from the XVIIIth Dynasty.

*Colossi of Memnon.* Representing Amenhotep III. (XVIIIth Dynasty), formerly stood in front of a temple.

*Temple of Medinet Habu.* Small temple of XVIIIth Dynasty (Queen Hatshepset and Thotmes III.), added to by the Ptolemies and Romans. The main building by Rameses III. (XXth Dynasty).

*Tombs of the Queens.* A few are of the XVIIIth but mostly of the XIXth and XXth Dynasties. The most interesting is that of Queen Tyi, wife of Amenhotep III. (XVIIIth Dynasty) and mother of the heretic Akhnaten.

From Luxor to Assuan, the chief attractions on the way are the great Roman temple at Esneh where also is the fourth modern Barrage, marking the mouth of another great irrigation canal, and the temple at Edfu, which was built by the Ptolemies between 237 B.C. and 57 B.C.

Another stretch of wilder scenery on the river marks the approach to the famous quarries in the Gebel Silsileh, so called because of a chain which was once stretched across the river here. These

quarries have been in use since the earliest days of Thebes. From this point to Assuan the chief antiquity is the temple of Kom Ombo, dating from the Ptolemaic era ; but those whose interests are wide enough to take in modern monuments will find here a work of engineering in the irrigation and reclamation of the desert which is worth examining. It may serve as an introduction to the greatest monument of modern engineering and architecture, the Assuan Dam.

The object and working of the Dam, and its history up to 1902, have already been explained. It only remains to recount the circumstances that led up to its raising and strengthening, which were only completed in 1912.

The Dam had hardly been completed when it was found that the action of the tremendous head of water pouring through the sluices was wearing away the solid rock on the down-stream side of the dam, and endangering the foundations ; in some cases pot-holes were being formed, which went a considerable distance below them. A great apron of masonry was therefore constructed, extending over the rock bed of the river for a considerable distance down stream ; and after some years of observation and experiment, a



method of doing this which would be thoroughly efficient was arrived at.

The next difficulty was the appearance of cracks in the structure, owing to the very great variation of temperature on the outside surfaces of the Dam. While the problem of dealing with these was under consideration, it was rapidly becoming evident that the total capacity of the Dam was insufficient to meet the increasing demands upon it. A series of low Niles, which, by the way, seemed to coincide strangely with Joseph's seven lean years, caused serious difficulty in providing sufficient water for the increasing area under cultivation. The height of the Dam, and therefore the amount of water stored in it, had been considerably reduced from the figures of the original design in order to meet the outcry against the submersion of the ruins of Philae; and now, before considering the raising of the Dam, a very careful examination was made of every other possible site for an additional dam further up the river. The result was, however, to shew that no other suitable site was available, and it was finally decided to proceed with the raising of the Assuan Dam to practically its original designed height. At the same time, as



## EL SEBUA, NUBIA,

THE temple, which lies in the Valley of the Lions (Wady Sebua), so-called probably from the avenue of sphinxes which led up to it from the river, dates from the reign of Rameses II. For centuries it lay completely buried in the golden sand, but this has now been cleared. It is evident that the Copts took possession of the temple, the walls still show traces of very clearly coloured frescoes, the principal one being a representation of St. Peter with his keys, some angels, and a figure of Christ.





the increase of height required the strengthening of the original structure to carry the increased weight, the opportunity was taken to thicken the Dam at the same time as heightening it. The double operation was commenced in 1907, and the new Dam, with a capacity more than doubled, was formally reopened in the autumn of 1912.

Already it has become evident, however, that finality has not even yet been reached in the matter of storage supply on the Nile. 1912 proved an exceedingly low Nile, and it is said that all the water in the raised Dam could nearly have been used up in meeting the scarcity. But at the present moment great drainage works are in progress in the northern part of the Delta, which will incidentally render possible the reclamation of nearly 1,000,000 acres at present lying waste, and therefore not requiring irrigation. To provide the necessary water supply for these new lands, when reclaimed, may tax the increased capacity of the Dam to its fullest extent, even in an ordinary year; and there is every probability that should a year of low Nile, such as 1912, recur after the reclamation of all these lands, the increased supply would not be sufficient. There is therefore no help for it—the storage supply

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must, in the not distant future, be still further increased. Further schemes are already under discussion, but their *venue* will, in all probability, be changed to the Sudan. It has long been known that great quantities of water are lost in the White Nile above Khartoum every summer, by evaporation. Owing to the heavy current of the Blue Nile crossing the mouth of the White Nile at Khartoum, the waters of the latter are practically dammed back during the height of the Blue Nile flood. During that period the White Nile is sent back to spread itself over the marshy regions of the *sudd*, and is lost by evaporation. It is probable, therefore, that the next scheme will be a great storage reservoir on the White Nile, above Khartoum, which will serve the double purpose of increasing the storage capacity against years of low flood and, at the same time, of holding back the pressure of the water from the White Nile in years of high flood, when there is danger of inundation in Egypt. Incidentally it will also enable the supply of water available for irrigation in the Sudan to be greatly increased. There is therefore plenty of work ahead yet in Egypt for the irrigation engineers, who have already achieved so much.

The question of the submersion of the temples of Philae has been mentioned. Few subjects have been made the subject of more, or more useless discussion. No one would for a moment question the great artistic loss involved through the submersion, even partial or for part of the year, of these wonderful relics, probably the most beautiful and most striking of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods in Egypt, for to these periods they almost entirely belong. But until some common measure of value can be invented for such unique relics of antiquity on the one hand, and the economic welfare of some millions of the people of Egypt on the other, the discussion is to a large extent beating the air, for neither side can convince the other. The only question that is really open to argument is whether any other scheme would have been possible, and that point must be left to the decision of engineering experts, whose advice the Government sought throughout. No one has ever suggested that the question was not fully and fairly considered, and an absolutely honest answer given. It only remains to add that every possible precaution was taken to minimize the loss. The foundations of the temples were strengthened, so that they are actually stronger

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than ever now ; and they shew no signs of suffering any structural damage by their annual submersion. At the same time the whole area, to be flooded for the first time from Assuan to Wady Halfa, was most thoroughly examined for antiquities before the waters were allowed to wipe them out. There were, as a matter of fact, few great monuments of antiquity above the Dam, and none of these was within reach of even the increased water level.

Before going on to describe them, however, a word must be said of the antiquities of Assuan itself. The existing buildings are certainly no index of the strategical importance of the place from the earliest ages, as the boundary of Egypt in the direction of Nubia. But it had other reasons for its importance in the great granite quarries which from the very earliest dynasties have been laid under contribution for the tombs of the kings in the north. Thus we find references to the bringing down of granite from Assuan for the tombs of kings as far back as the Vth and VIth Dynasties, who are traditionally connected with Elephantine Island. The quarries lie to the north of the town, and half-finished blocks still *in situ* shew the methods employed in



## EL SERIRIEH

To the south of the village lies the little Moham-  
medan graveyard, silent and deserted, in a small sandy  
plain surrounded by cliffs and long sweeps of white  
sand. The village, shrouded by a group of palm trees,  
is on the edge of a little creek formed by the river at  
high Nile. As the river falls, a wide stretch of sand,  
enriched by the water brought down at flood time, is  
uncovered. This is speedily cultivated, and a crop of  
lupines, water-melons, barley, and wheat is sown and  
reaped within a surprisingly short space of time.





procuring the material for the great obelisks and colossi of the megalithic period.

Of the existing ruins little need be said. There is a small Ptolemaic temple at Assuan, and rock inscriptions near by which date back to the XVIIIth Dynasty. On the island of Elephantine itself perhaps the most interesting relic is the Nilometer, described by Strabo and restored in the nineteenth century by the Khedive Ismail. It is known that there were in relatively recent times remains of temples dating from the XVIIIth Dynasty, but of these practically nothing remains. The view of the cataract itself from the higher parts of the island is very fine. On the opposite bank of the river are a number of rock tombs, some of which are of grandees of the VIth Dynasty, and others belong to the Middle Kingdom or XIIth Dynasty. Near here is the monastery of St. Simon, one of the largest and best preserved of the Coptic convents, though it has been deserted for 600 years.

Returning to the east bank, the ancient Arabic cemetery on the hill to the south of Assuan may be visited. It contained many tombs of great age for anything Arab in Egypt, *e.g.* the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. Most of them were in the old Cufic characters.

Philae, again, cannot claim for its temples more than a very moderate antiquity compared with the oldest memorials of Assuan. The earliest existing building, with the exception of a few foundations and architectural fragments that may have been incorporated in later buildings, is a portal erected by Nectanebo of the XXXth Dynasty. The great temples of the island are mostly Ptolemaic and Roman, for there is probably more Roman work here than in any other part of the country. The well-known Pharaoh's Bed, for example, which, by the way, was never completed, bears reliefs of Trajan offering oblations to Egyptian deities. On the island of Bigeh near by there are also remains of Ptolemaic temples with fragments of statues dating back to the XVIIIth Dynasty.

On another island (Sehel) north of the cataract are further ruins of temples about the same periods as those last mentioned, XVIIIth Dynasty and Ptolemaic, and another relic almost in its way more interesting. This is a Ptolemaic inscription high up on a rock to the south-east of the island, narrating that in the reign of King Zoser, the builder of the Step Pyramid of Sakkara, the Nile failed to rise during a period of seven years and that a famine arose in the land in consequence,

until, at the prayer of the king, the cataract god Khnum put an end to it by a fresh inundation. It looks as if even Joseph had learned the lesson that history repeats itself.<sup>1</sup>

From Shellal, the voyage up the river may be resumed as far as the second cataract. Apart from antiquarian interest this stretch of the river has attractions of its own. Politically the river is still in Egypt, which stretches to Wady Halfa at the foot of the second cataract; but geographically it is part of Nubia and the character of the scenery is changing. For part of the way, at least, the river banks are more rocky and bolder and higher. Thus the great gorge of Kalabsheh and the mountain fortress of Kasr Ibrahim (or Ibrim), the Gibraltar of the Nile, are very striking.

There are temples at Debot (Ptolemaic), Kertassi, almost a replica of the beautiful Kiosque of Philae, Kalabsheh (Roman), Bet-el-Walli (Rameses II.), Dendur (Roman), Gerf Husein (Rameses II.), Dakkeh (Ptolemaic), Wady Sebuah (Rameses II.), Amada (XVIIIth Dynasty), and Derr (Rameses II.). The series finishes with the magnificent climax of Abu Simbel, 50 miles north of Wady

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Halfa. "The great temple is a superb conception of Egypt's greatest sovereign. Rameses simply took a vast hillside and carved a temple out of its heart, while on the immense façade, 120 feet long and 100 feet high, he placed the 'four immortal warders, his own royal likeness four times repeated.' These colossal statues are nearly 70 feet high, and the forefinger of each is a yard long. The temple is so orientated that on one day of the year, probably on the day of the dedication, at sunrise one shaft of light pierces the darkness of the outer and inner halls, and falls like living fire on the shrine itself, the effect being overwhelming in its mystery and awe."<sup>1</sup>

Between Abu Simbel and Wady Halfa there is only one other point of special interest, the Pulpit Rock of Abusir, a view point, 300 feet high, from which the outlook over the rocky channel of the river at the second cataract and away to the desert on all other sides is unequalled.

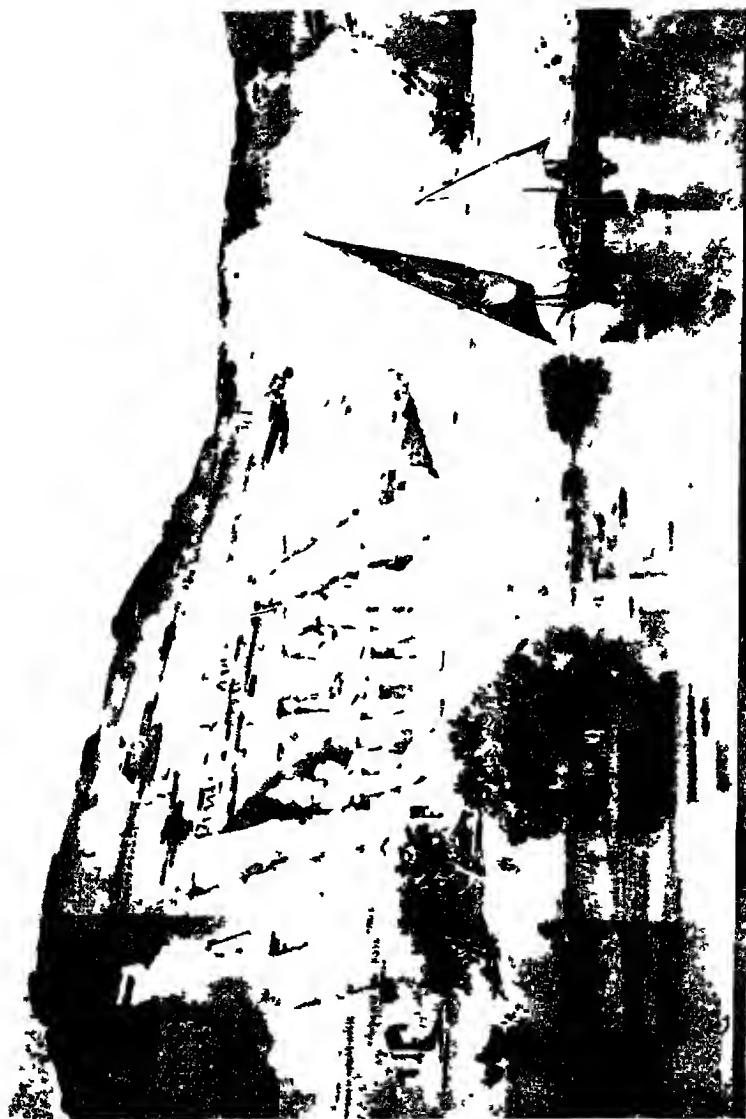
Here travellers for Khartoum and the Sudan must again take train for the last stretch across the desert to Khartoum. We would fain follow them, though the attractions of the country are very different from those of Egypt. There is little

<sup>1</sup> Reynolds Ball, *Cairo of To-day*.



## ABU SIMBEL

THE great temple built by Rameses II. to commemorate one of his victories is second to none in all Egypt for grandeur and majesty, and is far the finest monument in Nubia. Hewn out of the solid face of the rock, the four colossal figures of the king seated on thrones guard the entrance of the temple itself, which is hollowed out of the rock to a depth of 185 feet. The work is in every way worthy of the great king, a stupendous undertaking carried out with consummate skill. In the first large hall are eight columns with immense statues of Osiris. Three chambers open out of the second hall, and the centre contains an altar and four seated figures. The whole temple is ornamented with reliefs and inscriptions in honour of Rameses II. and his battles.





of antiquarian interest, though the ruins of the Isle of Meroë are now being excavated. But the Sudan is essentially a country of the future. There is little in its past to which we can look back with pleasure, far less with reverence. It was to the Ancient Egyptians an unknown land of forbidding aspect, and even the modern Egyptian will hardly be persuaded to enter it. It has always been a source of weakness and danger to the fertile plains of Egypt, from the day when the first known conquerors of Egypt, the ancestors of the earliest dynastic rulers, themselves came down from it.

Here, then, we may take leave of the banks of the Nile, as they are taking leave of Egypt. The river has carried us far—through a thousand miles of distance and six thousand years of history. No wonder that the fascination of Egypt descends upon the traveller, that the part it has played in the history of civilization in the world commands his interest and holds it even after he has left its golden sands and muddy waters far behind him. A little knowledge of Egypt is a dangerous thing, for it will drag you on to seek for more; and satiety is as impossible as perfect knowledge. All that we know about it yet is only a drop in the bucket to what there is to know. We are only



beginning, for example, to understand the connection between the civilization of Egypt and that of the Western world, which, till a few decades ago, we had attributed to Greece. That Greece got much of it from Egypt is now quite certain, but how, and how much, is still largely supposition. Egypt's relation to other parts of the world is also largely conjectural. The gold of Ophir which the Queen of Sheba brought to King Solomon and to Egypt is now thought to have come from mines in the centre of Africa or Rhodesia, so that King Solomon's Mines of Rider Haggard's tale may prove to be intelligent anticipation of historic facts. The Hittites, with whom the Egyptians of the Great Empire were continually at war, are only now being brought into the clearer light of historical knowledge, and it is probable that they formed a very important link in the chain between Egyptian civilization and the Greeks and Phoenicians who borrowed from them and gave to us.

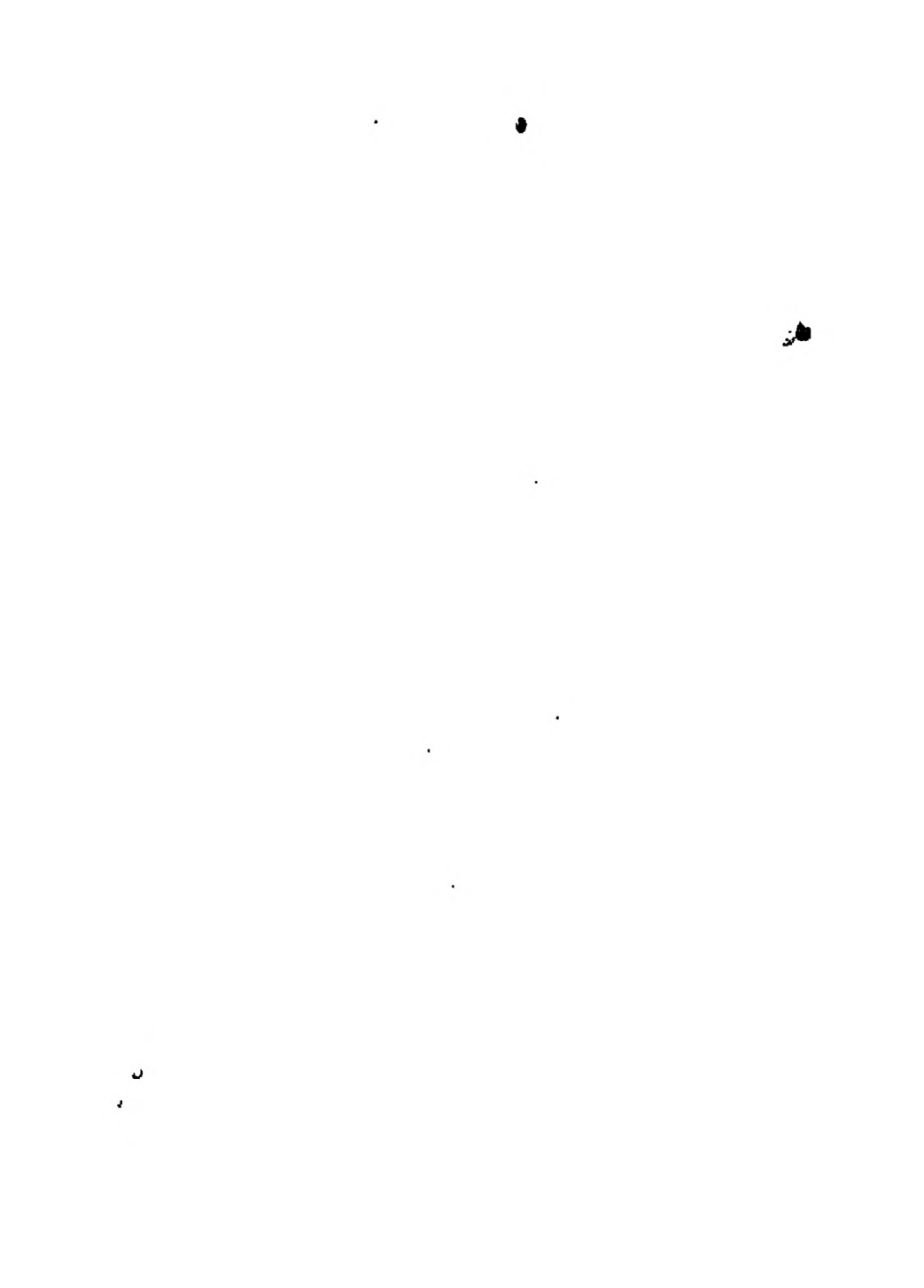
But the fascination of Egypt is not all in her ancient history. Her share in the future political history of the world may well be hardly less important than her past has been. The Turkish Empire in Europe is in the melting pot now, and



## THE SECOND CATARACT

ABOUT five miles above Wady Halfa the second cataract begins. The river rushes past hundreds of little islands, some merely immense blocks of shining coal black granite, others with little grey sandy bays, fringed with mimosa (sont) bushes and tufts of papyrus reeds. Dominating the landscape stands the great rock called Abu Sir, from whose summit there is a glorious view. As far as the eye can see, the river is broken and dashes past the rocks, and for nearly a hundred miles is practically one long continued cataract. To the south may be seen a faint outline of the hills of Dongola, and the panorama, which is indeed superb, includes long distant sweeps of desert, while at your very feet long slopes of golden sand run down to the water's edge.





Egypt's future position can hardly fail to be affected. Will the stolen Khalifate come back to Egypt after 400 years in alien hands, for the Turks had no claim to it but that of conquest? Where will Egypt be when the battle of the Canals is fought out and de Lesseps' later conception of the Panama has had time to claim its share of the world's traffic from the Suez Canal?

What is to be the future of Egypt? A British Protectorate seems the natural answer, but it is no answer at all. Suppose it were that to-morrow, what next? What is to be the final fate of the attempt of one Western nation to rule Eastern nations with whom it can never amalgamate? Never is a big word, but here it seems really the only word, for as long as English men will not marry native women, or, still more impossible, allow native Egyptians to marry English women, there can never be any relations between England and Egypt but that of conqueror and conquered. What is to be the end of it all? Civilization has pretty well gone the round of the world now. Is it going to begin again, and where, or is it going to work backwards now from West to East?

The study of Egyptian history has at least this merit; it teaches us to think not in centuries, but



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in the longer periods which make the history of dynasties and nations. Egypt's best days were long gone by before England began to rise above the stage of prehistoric barbarism. Will she ever come into her own again? Will the Pyramids ever be restored by an Egyptian race worthy to succeed to the heritage of the men who built them? Will the banks of the Nile ever again be the centre of the world's civilization?

## APPENDICES



# APPENDIX A

## BRIEF EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY

SHOWING MAIN PERIODS, APPROXIMATE DATES, CHIEF PERSONAGES AND SURVIVING MONUMENTS

Dynasty.	Approximate date of commencement according to		Chief Names.	Capital.	Surviving Monuments.
	Flinders Petrie.	Breasted.			
Prehistoric Times Predynastic (separate kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt)	B. C. Before 4500	B. C. Before 3400	...	...	Tombs in Nubia
Egyptian Dynasties					
I. and II. . . . .	4500	3400	Mena * * *	Thinis or Abydos and Memphis	Tombs at Abydos and Tarkhan Mining in Sinai
Old Kingdom					
III. . . . .	4100	2980	Zoser Seneferu <sup>1</sup>	Memphis "	Step pyramid of Sak- kara Pyramids of Meydum and Dahshur
IV. . . . .	3969 3908 3845	2900 2869 2800	Khufu (Cheops) Khafra (Che- phren) Men-kau-ra (My- cerinus) * * *	" " " "	Great Pyramid of Giza Second " " Third " " Sphinx "

<sup>1</sup> According to Flinders Petrie, Seneferu was the first king of the IVth Dynasty.

## BRIEF EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY—Continued

Dynasty.	Approximate date of commencement according to		Chief Names.	Capital.	Surviving Monuments.
	Flinders Petrie.	Breasted.			
Old Kingdom— <i>contd.</i> V. and VI. . . . .	B. C. 3721	B. O. 2750	Usersak * * *	Memphis	Pyramids at Sakkara and Abusir Records at Elephantine, etc.
	3536	2655	Unas * * *		
	3447	2590	Pepy * * *		
	3347	2476	Merenra * * *		
	3322	2475	Break up of Monarchy		
VII. to X. . . . .				Fall of Memphis Rise of Herculopolis, followed by Thebes	...
Middle Kingdom XI. . . . .	2985	2160	Antef <sup>1</sup> Mentuhotep <sup>1</sup>	Thebes	Insignificant tombs at Beni Hassan
			Amenemhat <sup>1</sup> Usertesen (Sesostris) <sup>1</sup>	Thebes and Fayum	Lake Moeris Temple of Karnak Tombs at Thebes Pyramids at Dahshur Lisht and Illahun Records at Elephantine, etc.
	2778	2000			Heliopolis Obelisk
XIII. to XVII. . . . .	2565	1788	Second dark age	Avaris Thebes	Hyksos kings Native dynasties

<sup>1</sup> Several kings of the same name.

## BRIEF EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY—Continued

Dynasty.	Approximate date of commencement.	Chief Names.	Capital.	Surviving Monuments.
<b>The Great Empire</b>				
XVIII. . . . .	B. C. 1587 (from this point chronology is practically agreed)	Amenhotep I.-IV. Thothmes I.-IV. Hatshepsut (Queen) Akhnaten (here- tic — changed his name from Amenhotep IV.) Haremheb Rameses I. and II. Seth I. and II. Merenptah	Thebes   Tell el Amarna  Thebes restored Thebes	Temples and tombs at Karnak, Thebes (see p. 239), and from Beni Hassan to Amada (Nubia) Mummies in Cairo Museum  Temples and tombs at Karnak, Thebes (see p. 239), and from Beni Hassan to Abu Simbel Mummies in Cairo Museum
XIX. . . . .	1328			
XX. . . . .	1202	Rameses III. to XII. (Priests usurping power from 1180)	Thebes	As numerous and almost as wide- spread as the XIXth

## BRIEF EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY—Continued

Dynasty.	Approximate date of commencement.	Chief Names.	Capital.	Surviving Monuments.
<b>Decadence</b>				
XXI. Tanite-Ammonite Period	B. C. 1102	...	Tanis and Thebes (concurrently)	Considerable remains at both places
XXII. Libyan Period	962	Sheshonk <sup>1</sup> Osorkon <sup>1</sup>	Bubastis	Bubastis and Karnak
XXIV. and XXV. Nubian or Ethiopian Period and Assyrian Period	756	Shabako and Taharqa Asurbanipal	Sais and Napata	Constant struggles
XXVI. Restoration	664	Psametik I.-III. Necho Amasis	Sais	Temples, etc., from Sais to Assuan Earliest foundation of Alexandria Naukratis built
<b>Foreign Rulers</b>				
XXVII. Persian Conquest	525	Cambyses to Artaxerxes		Temple at Khargeh Oasis <sup>1</sup>
XXVIII. to XXX. Brief Restoration	405	Nektanebo <sup>1</sup>	Sais	Considerable remains from the Delta to Philaæ and Khargeh

<sup>1</sup> More than one king of the same name.

## BRIEF EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY—Continued

Dynasty.	Date of commencement.	Chief Names.	Capital.	Surviving Monuments
<b>Foreign Rulers—contd.</b>				
Greek Period . . .	B.C. 332	Alexander the Great Ptolemy I. to XVI. Cleopatra (4) Julius Caesar in Egypt	Alexandria	Temples at Karnak, Thebes (see p. 230), and at Esfu, Kom Ombo, Philae, etc., and in Nubia
Roman Period . . .	47 30	Death of Antony and Cleopatra Augustus becomes Emperor	Alexandria	Ptolemaic temples, etc., completed or extended. A few purely Roman, e.g. Denderah, and at Philae and in Nubia (Pompey's Pillar of Diocletian at Alexandria)
	A.D. 396	Egypt transferred to Byzantine Empire	Alexandria	Roman Fort at Babylon Coptic Monasteries



## BRIEF EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY—Continued

Dynasty.	Date of commencement.	Chief Names.	Capital.	Surviving Monuments.
<b>Arab Period</b>	<b>A. D.</b>			
Arab Conquest	640	Amr ibn-el-Aas (first of ninety-eight governors)	Masr - el - Fostat (Town of the Tent)	Mosque of Amr Nilometer at Roda
Omeyyad Khalifs of Damascus	658	...	Masr - el - Askar (The Cantonments)	
Abbasside Khalifs of Baghdad	750			
House of Tulun	868	Ahmed Ibn-Tulun	Masr - el - Katal (The Wards)	Mosque of Ibn-Tulun
Fatimides	969	el-Mo'izz	Masr - el - Kahira (The Victorious)	Mosque of el-Azhar
	975	el-Aziz		Mosque of el-Hakim
	996	el-Hakim		
	1021	el-Zahir		
	1036	Mustansir		
House of Saladdin (Ayoubides)	1169	Salah - el - din Yusef - ibn- Ayoub	Masr-el-Kahira extended	Bedr's wall and three great gates Citadel and new walls
Turkish (Bahri)		Queen Sheger-el- Durr	"	Tomb of el-Salih
Mamelukes	1250			

## BRIEF EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY—Continued

Dynasty.	Dates.	Chief Names.	Capital.	Surviving Monuments.
Arab Period— <i>contd.</i> Turkish Mamelukes (Bahri)— <i>contd.</i>	A.D. 1260-1277	el-Zahir Beybars	Masr-el-Kahira	Mosque of el-Zahir
	1279-1290	el-Mansur Kalāin		Maristan of Kalāin
	1293-1341	el-Nasr Mohamed (reigned three times with interruptions)	...	Mosque and palace of el-Nasr in citadel
	1347-1361 (with interruption)	el-Nasr Hassan	...	Mosque of el Mar-dāy
Circasian (Burgi) Mamelukes	1362-1399 (with interruption)	el-Zahir Barkuk	...	Mosque of Sultan Hassan
	1412-1421	el-Moayyad	...	Mosque of Barkuk
	1422-1438 1438-1453 1468-1496	Bars Bey Gakmak Kaft Bey	...	Mosque of el-Mosy-yad
	1501-1516 1516-1517	Kansuh el-Ghury Tuman Bey	...	Madrasa and tomb of Bars Bey Mosques, tomb, and wekala of Kaft Bey
Ottoman Conquest	1517	Khalifate passes	...	Mosque and tomb of el-Ghury
			to Sultan of Turkey, Egyptian becomes a Turkish province	...

## MODERN EGYPT

	1769	Mohammed Aly born at Kavalla in Macedonia.
	1771	Egypt again practically independent of Sultan under Aly Bey.
French Invasion	1798	Napoleon lands at Alexandria, defeats Mamelukes at Embabelh. French fleet defeated at Aboukir by Nelson.
	1801	French evacuate Egypt.
Dynasty of Mohammed Aly	1805	Mohammed Aly becomes Pasha of Egypt.
	1807	British evacuate Egypt, after defeat at Rosetta.
	1811	Massacre of the Mamelukes. War against Wabbabis begins.
	1820-22	Conquest of Sudan.
	1820	Jumel introduces cotton.
	1824-29	War of Greek Independence. Battle of Navarino, 1827.
	1831-41	Syrian Wars. Treaty of London, 1840. Mohammed Aly receives hereditary Pashalik of Egypt by firman of 1841.
	1845	Waghorn inaugurates the Overland Route.
	1847	Foundation-stone of Delta Barrage laid.
	1848	Ibrahim becomes Regent, July; dies 10th November. Abbas, Regent.
Abbas Pasha	1849	Mohammed Aly died, 2nd August.
Said Pasha	1854	Abbas murdered, July.
	1854-56	Suez Canal Concessions granted.
Ismail Pasha	1863	Ismail succeeds on Said's death, 18th January.
	1866-67	Made Khedive. Massowah and Suakim added to Egypt. Line of succession altered.
	1869	Suez Canal opened, 17th November. Equatorial province added to Sudan.
	1875	Sale of Suez Canal shares to British Government.

MODERN EGYPT—*Continued*

	1876	Intervention of Bond-holders. Mixed Courts and Caisse de la Dette established.
	1878-79	Commission of Enquiry. Ismail surrenders the Domains. Nubar-Wilson Ministry. <i>Coup d'état</i> . Deposition of Ismail, 26th June; died 1895.
Tewfik . . .	1879	Accession, 26th June. Dual control.
	1880	Law of Liquidation.
	1882	Arabi Revolt. Riots and bombardment of Alexandria. Tel-el-Kebir. British occupation. Return of Sir E. Baring to Egypt. Hicks' and Baker's Sudan expeditions defeated by Mahdi.
	1885	Convention of London. Guaranteed loan. Death of Gordon at Khartoum. Evacuation of the Sudan.
Abbas Hilmy . . .	1892	Death of Tewfik, 7th January. Abbas Hilmy succeeds.
	1898	Reconquest of Sudan. Battle of Omdurman.
	1902	Assuan Dam opened.
	1904	Anglo-French Agreement. Revision of Egyptian financial arrangements.
	1907	Lord Cromer resigns. Sir Eldon Gorst becomes British Agent.
	1911	Death of Sir E. Gorst. Lord Kitchener appointed.
	1912	Raising of Assuan Dam completed.

## APPENDIX B

### NOTE ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF ARABIC<sup>1</sup>

Nothing contributes more to the real enjoyment of travel in a foreign country than a little knowledge of the *correct* pronunciation of the language, and nowhere does this apply more strongly than in Egypt. The apparent difficulty of Arabic, owing to its extreme difference as an Oriental language from all Latin or Anglo-Saxon tongues, begins to disappear when a few simple rules are understood.

Arabic is a very guttural language. *Kh* sounds like the Scotch *ch* in "loch," *e.g.* *Khartoum*, not *Kartoum*. *Gh* is a still heavier guttural, like the sound of gargling, or a Scotsman pronouncing a double *r*. *R* must always be sounded even in the middle of a word, as *Mardani*, again like a Scotsman.

The short vowel *a*, which is not written in Arabic, is puzzling because it may be transcribed in so many different ways, *ā*, *ē*, *ī*, *ō*, or *ū*. Thus "Mohammed" might just as well be written "Mahammad" or "Muhammed"; the French wrote it "Mehemet."

The long vowels are fully sounded, *e.g.* *harīm* (women) = *hāreem*, and should perhaps be so written.

The accent in Arabic comes as a rule much nearer the

---

<sup>1</sup> Founded mainly on the Editor's preface to Lane's *Arabian Nights* (1877 ed.).

end of the word than in English—very often on the last syllable, as *harim*, above quoted.

The terminal *eh* is equivalent to *a* of moderate length, like *el Gezireh*=*Gezira*. A peculiarity of nouns ending in *eh* or *a* is that in the possessive case the *a* becomes *et*, thus *el Gezira el Roda* (the island of Roda) becomes *el Geziret er Roda*.

The definite article *el* before *d*, *s*, *r*, *t*, and *n* is changed to the sound of the initial letter of the word following, and is often so written, *e.g.* *Saleh-el-din* is pronounced *Salah-ed-din*, hence *Saladdin*, *Kasr-el-Nil* is pronounced *Kasr-en-Nil*. *El Suan*=*Es Suan*, hence *Assuan*.

Spoken Arabic of course varies greatly, not only in different countries, *e.g.* Syria or Arabia as against Egypt, but also in different districts of Egypt. Thus the Arabian *jj* (as in *Hajj*) becomes a hard *gg* (*Hagg*) in Egypt, *e.g.* *Gebel* (a hill) is the same as the Arabian *Jebel*. "*Kourbag*" (a whip) is in Syria "*kourbaj*," hence the French form, now universally used even in English books, "*kourbash*."

Again, *Q* is a different sound in Upper Egypt, in Cairo, or in the Delta. Thus "*Qena*" is pronounced "*Gēna*" in the town itself, in Cairo it is pronounced "'Ena" with a peculiar deep throaty gulp at the beginning which cannot be represented in writing. English people call it "*Kena*," which spelling I have adopted. But it is a different sound altogether from *Khartoum*.

# APPENDIX C

## ETYMOLOGY OF ARABIC PLACE NAMES

Abiad ( <i>fem.</i> beda)	white . . .	Der-el-Abiad (white convent).
Abu ( <i>or</i> abou)	father . . .	Abj Hamed.
Ahmar ( <i>fem.</i> ham- ra)	red . . .	Gamia-el-hamra ( <i>cf.</i> Alhambra).
Atiqa . . .	old . . .	Masr-el-Atiqa (Old Cairo).
Azraq ( <i>fem.</i> zara)	blue . . .	Bahr-el-asraq.
Bab ( <i>pl.</i> bēban)	gate . . .	Beban-el-Muluk (tombs of the kings).
Bahr . . .	river ( <i>or</i> canal) .	Bahr-el-Ghazal.
Beled . . .	small town or "country"	Beled-el-Sudan (country of the black men).
Beni . . .	sons of . . .	Beni Hassan.
Bet . . .	house . . .	Bet-el-Kadi (judge).
Birka . . .	pool . . .	Birket-el-Karoon (Qurun).
Dar . . .	large house . . .	Dar-el-Islam (figuratively the "house" of the Mohammedan faith).
Darb . . .	road . . .	Darb el Gamamiz.
Dēr . . .	monastery or con- vent.	Dēr-el-Bahri.
Ein . . .	well . . .	Ein Musa (Moses).
Ezbeh . . .	small village . . .	Ezbet el Zeitoun (olives).
Gamia . . .	mosque (preach- ing)	Gamia el Azhar.

Gebel . . .	hill or mountain	Gebel Tarik (Gibraltar).
Gedid . . .	new . . .	Masr el Gedida (Heliopolis).
Gerf . . .	a sloping river bank	Gerf Husein.
Gezira . . .	island . . .	Geziret-el-Roda.
Hamмам . . .	bath . . .	El Hammamat (plural).
Hara . . .	a quarter . . .	Haret el Roumi (Greek quarter).
Ibn . . .	son of . . .	Ahmed Ibn-Tulun.
Iswid ( <i>fem.</i> soda)	black . . .	Bahr-el-Iswid.
Kadim (Qadeem)	old . . .	Masr-el-Qadeem.
Kafr . . .	village . . .	Kafr-el-Zayat.
Kantara . . .	bridge . . .	el Kantara (on the Suez Canal).
Kasr . . .	palace . . .	Kasr-el-Nil.
Kebir ( <i>fem.</i> ku- bra)	great . . .	Tel-el-Kebir.
Keniseh . . .	church . . .	Keniseh Inglizi (English).
Khan . . .	inn . . .	Khan-el-Khalili.
-khana (termina- tion)	place or store . . .	Kutubkhana (library).
Kom . . .	hill (mound of rubbish)	Kom Ombo.
Kubba (koubbeh)	dome(hence tomb)	Serai el Qubba.
Kubri . . .	bridge . . .	Kubri Kasr-el-Nil.
Kurna . . .	a peak . . .	Kurnet Murrai.
Limoun . . .	lemons or limes . . .	Kubri Limoun.
Ma'adi . . .	quarry . . .	Suburb of Cairo on Helouan line.
Madrassa . . .	school (or teach- ing mosque)	Madrasset el-Salih Ayoub.
Mahatta . . .	station . . .	Mahattet-el-Matarieh.
Marg . . .	plain or meadow.	el Matarieh-el-Marg.
Maristan . . .	hospital (mosque)	Maristan el Kalaün.
Medina . . .	city . . .	Medinet el Fayum.
Mehalla . . .	place or town . . .	Mehallet el Kubra.
Midan (meidan)	square (originally polo ground)	Midan Bab-el-Hadid.
Minia (Minieh) . . .	market . . .	Miniet el Bassal (onions).



Nakhl	. . .	dates . . .	Ezbet-el-Nakhl.
Ras	. . .	head, or headland	Ras-el-Tin (figs).
Serai	. . .	palace . . .	hence caravanserai.
Sharia (shareh)	. . .	street . . .	Sharia Mohammed Aly.
Sheikh	. . .	elder, chief. . .	Kafr-el-Sheikh.
Shems (shams)	. . .	the sun . . .	Ein-el-shams.
Sikka	. . .	road, or way . . .	Sikket-el-Gedida.
Sughayar (pronounced Zura- yar)	. . .	small . . .	Bahr-el-sughayar.
Suk	. . .	market or bazaar.	Suk-el-Nahassin (coppersmiths).
Tel or tell	. . .	hill . . .	Tell el Amarna.
Tor	. . .	rocky hill . . .	Quarantine station on the Red Sea.
Timsah	. . .	crocodile . . .	Lake Timsah (Ismailia).
Wady.	. . .	watercourse . . .	Wady Halfa (cf. Guadalquivir= Wady-el-Kebir).

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